

# CINEFANTASTIQUE®

January 1985

Volume 15 Number 1

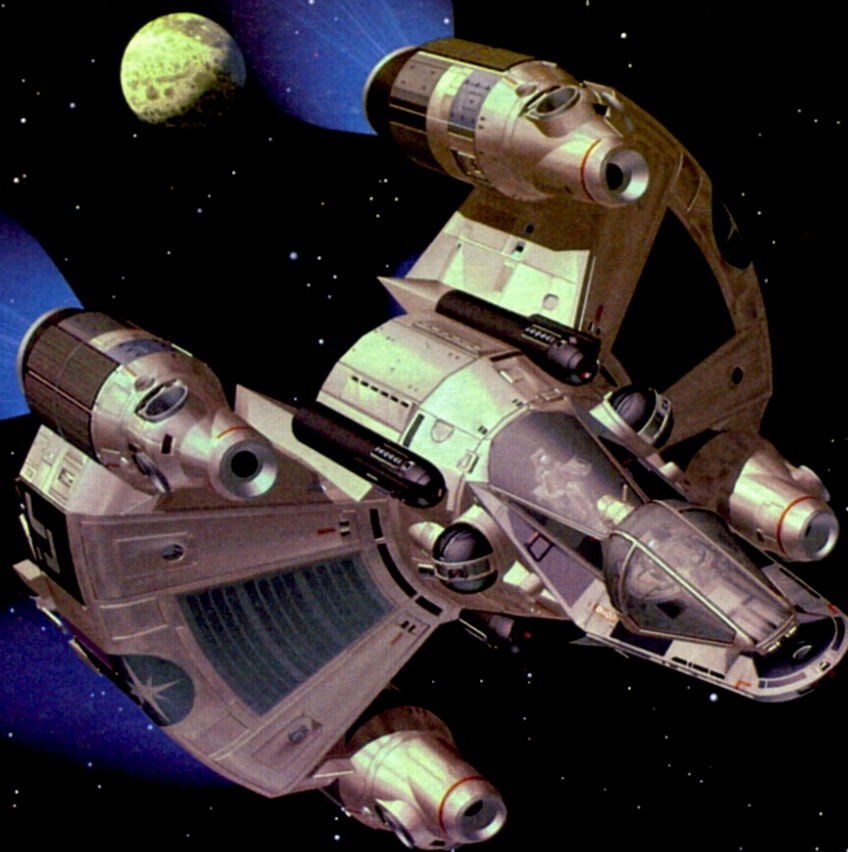
\$4.50

U.K. £3.70

# 2010

## ODYSSEY TWO

Exclusive Preview!



## THE LAST STARFIGHTER

A computer revolution in special effects

### BABY

The saga of a girl and a dinosaur coming soon from Walt Disney

### THE COMPANY OF WOLVES

Startling man-into-wolf makeup transformations by Chris Tucker

### SUPERGIRL

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's a Thanksgiving Turkey

In the very near future a small group of Americans and Russians  
set out on the greatest adventure of them all...

To see if there is life out there.

They find it.

2010

THE YEAR WE MAKE CONTACT.

a Peter Hyams film

ROY SCHEIDER

'2010'

JOHN LITHGOW • HELEN MIRREN • BOB BALABAN • KEIR DULLEA  
music by DAVID SHIRE based on the novel by ARTHUR C. CLARKE  
written for the screen, produced and directed by PETER HYAMS



distributed by MGM/UA Entertainment Co. © 1984 MGM/UA ENTERTAINMENT CO.



WORLD PREMIERE ENGAGEMENT BEGINS DECEMBER 7th

# CONTENTS

VOLUME 15 NUMBER 1

The magic "sense of Wonder."

JANUARY, 1985

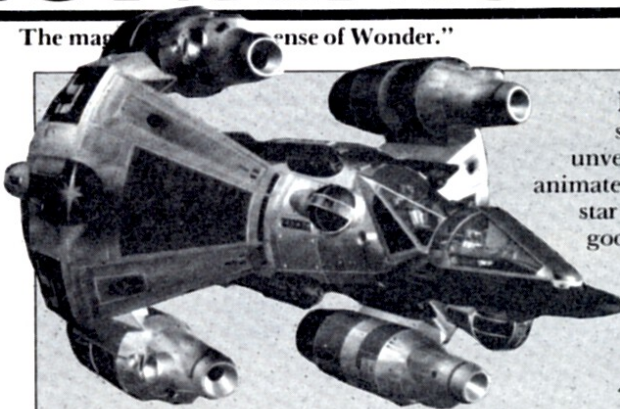
TRON demonstrated that computer animation was pretty. Last summer THE LAST STARFIGHTER established computer animation as a practical special effects technique. This issue looks at the computer revolution in filmmaking being spearheaded by Digital Productions, and details their groundbreaking work on THE LAST STARFIGHTER.

Dennis K. Fischer talks to Digital's co-founder John Whitney, Jr., who acted as an associate producer on THE LAST STARFIGHTER. Whitney, the son of computer graphics pioneer John Whitney, Sr., recognized computer animation as an indispensable tool in effects filmmaking and established Digital Productions as the first and only company with an advanced supercomputer devoted to animation work for the motion picture industry. Whitney never refers to the work that the company does as "animation." Whitney prefers to use the company's brand name for computer animation, Digital Scene Simulation, emphasizing the realism achieved by their process.

Fischer also focuses on Ron Cobb, the designer of THE LAST STARFIGHTER's computer simulated effects. Cobb is justifiably proud of mastering the film's advanced technology, but admits to being hamstrung by the film's producers at Lorimar who insisted on purveying a STAR WARS view of space travel. The decision to stick with this tried-and-true approach often results in making the film's advanced computer imagery seem old-hat.

To evaluate Digital Productions work on THE LAST STARFIGHTER, and to gauge where the computer animation effects field may be headed, Charlotte Wolter consulted with Dr. James Blinn, one of the leading experts in the field, and Art Durinski of Omnibus Computer Graphics, a leading supplier. Both suggest that Digital Productions' emphasis on realism may be misplaced. Said Blinn, "Movies don't, and never will, portray reality."

Frederick S. Clarke



## 24 THE LAST STARFIGHTER

Is it real or is it Digital? Last summer Digital Productions unveiled 25 minutes of computer animated special effects of spaceship star wars that looked every bit as good as the best motion control modelwork. Here's how they did it, and what the new technology means for the effects filmmaker.

Article by Dennis K. Fischer



Page 9

## 4 THE COMPANY OF WOLVES

An artsy retelling of the story of "Little Red Riding Hood" with state-of-the-art makeup effects by Christopher Tucker.

Article by Alan Jones



Page 15

## 9 2010: ODYSSEY TWO

Director Peter Hyams and production designer Albert Brenner preview their work on the sequel to Stanley Kubrick's 2001.

Article by Charlotte Wolter and Kyle Counts

## 15 TALES FROM THE DARKSIDE

The filmmakers who brought you NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD clean up their act for television with this new series.

Article by Dan Scapperotti



Page 22

## 19 RADIOACTIVE DREAMS

A cultural odyssey of post-nuclear America from Albert Pyun, the director of THE SWORD AND THE SORCEROR.

Article by Kyle Counts

## 22 BABY

A shaggy dinosaur story from Walt Disney starring Sean Young, William Katt, and a cute, 50-foot brontosaurus.

Article by Michael Mayo



Page 39

## 39 SUPERGIRL

Tri-Star Pictures serves-up another kind of Thanksgiving turkey with its release of this new low for superheroes.

Review by Alan Jones

**PUBLISHER & EDITOR:** Frederick S. Clarke. **MANAGING EDITOR:** Avis L. Weathersbee.

**BUREAUS:** New York / Dan Scapperotti. **Los Angeles** / Michael Mayo. **London** / Alan Jones. **CONTRIBUTORS:** Kyle Counts, Steven Dimeo, Dennis K. Fischer, Joseph Francavilla, Bill George, Judith P. Harris, Patrick Hobby, David J. Hogan, Alan Karp, Bill Kelley, Randall P. Larson, Uwe Luserke, Allen Malmquist, Richard Tomasic, Charlotte Wolter. **Office Manager:** Celeste Casey Clarke. **Assistant:** Nancy Ashmore. **Circulation Manager:** Ann Suchomski.

**PHOTO CREDITS:** Digital Scene Simulation SM from THE LAST STARFIGHTER by Digital Productions, Los Angeles, CA © 1984. All Rights Reserved. Photo of Lyle Conway (pp 16) by Barry Peake. Photos from BABY (pp 23, 40 bottom) by Nancy Moran / Sigma. Photo of Leonard Nimoy (pp 40) by John Shannon. Photo from STREETS OF FIRE (pp 40 bottom left) by Stephen Vaughan. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:** Stephen Archer, Phyllis Bishop, Dr. James Blinn, Greg Cannon, Chorvinsky Studios, Ron Cobb, Cosmopolitan, David Stipes Productions, Digital Productions (Stephanie Mardesich), Scott Fields, Peter Kuran, John Whitney, Sr., Gene Winfield.

**CINEFANTASTIQUE MAGAZINE** (ISSN 0145-6032) is published five times a year, in January, March, May, July, and September at P. O. Box 270, Oak Park, IL 60303. Second class postage paid at Forest Park, IL 60130. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to CINEFANTASTIQUE, P. O. Box 270, Oak Park IL 60303. **Subscriptions:** Four Issues \$16, Eight Issues \$30, Twelve Issues \$42. (Foreign & Canada: Four issues \$19, Eight Issues \$35, Twelve Issues \$49) Single issues when purchased from publisher: \$6. **Retail Distribution:** In the U.S. by Eastern News Dist. 111 Eighth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10041. (212) 255-5620. In Great Britain by Titan Dist., P.O. Box 250, London E3 4RT. Phone: (01) 980-6167. **Submissions** of artwork and articles are encouraged, but no correspondence can be answered unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope. Printed in USA. Contents copyright © 1984 by Frederick S. Clarke. CINEFANTASTIQUE® is a Registered U. S. Trademark.

# THE COMPANY OF WOLVES

*"Little Red Riding Hood" with art film pretensions and state-of-the-art effects.*

by Alan Jones

Special make-up technician Chris Tucker emerges bemused from a woodland cottage situated in his spartan workshop at Shepperton studios. Actress Kathryn Pogson had just become hysterical, screaming her heart out during a man-into-wolf transformation scene and breaking a delicate prosthetic claw.

"She got carried away," Tucker said ruefully. "Surgery will now have to be done on the armature, which is anatomically correct in every detail, before it is ready again for another try tomorrow. This will tie up one of my assistants for three hours."

Shooting is tight on the nine week schedule for THE COMPANY OF WOLVES. Tucker knows that if the special effect doesn't get done now, it never will. Prospective audiences may have to use their imaginations.

Chris Tucker, who designed THE ELEPHANT MAN, is one of the many agreeable surprises contained in THE COMPANY OF WOLVES. Based on Angela Carter's short story, it is the first film from Palace Productions which runs the successful Scala repertory cinema in London and which handled the U.K. distribution for DIVA, THE EVIL DEAD, and MERRY CHRISTMAS MR. LAWRENCE. The fantastic box-office returns achieved by those films have funded THE COMPANY OF WOLVES, with help from I.T.C. and preselling of television rights to Britain's Channel 4. The film stars Angela Lansbury, David



Sarah Patterson plays little Red, on the run to grandmother's house, in the British Palace Production.

Warner, Stephen Rea, and 13 year-old Sarah Patterson. Another surprise being kept under wraps is the guest appearance by Terence Stamp, who agreed to a cameo for the price of a new suit.

Executive and co-producer Stephen Woolley admits that it is hard to explain exactly what THE COMPANY OF WOLVES is about. Basically, it's an adult parody of the traditional tale of "Little Red Riding Hood." The director is Neil Jordan, whose last film ANGEL—a political thriller set against the backdrop of Northern Ireland—impressed the producers. Said Jordan, "Its prime concerns are a young girl's dreams about wolfishness. It's about the end of childhood where the implications of

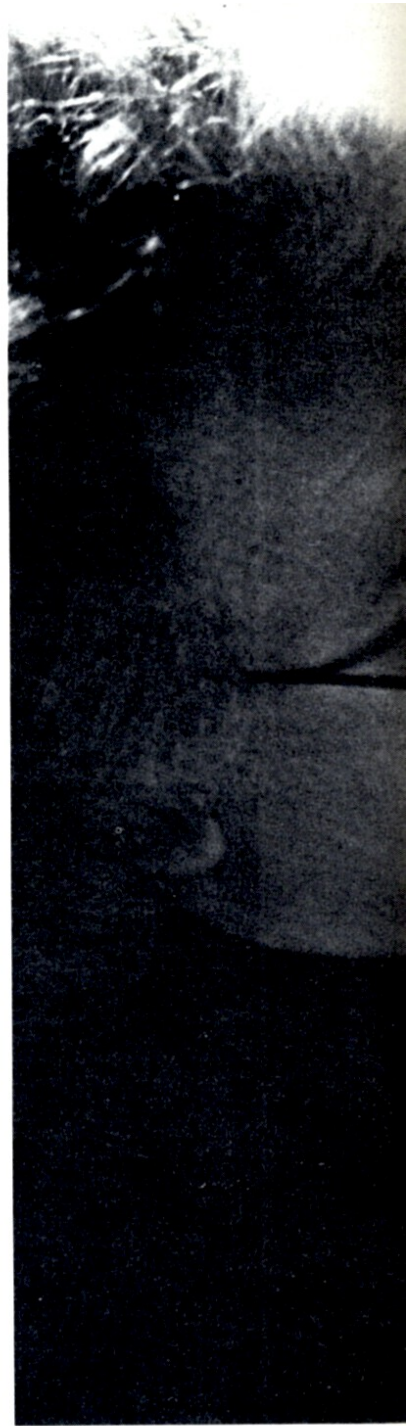
those childhood horrors are drawn out. A girl who goes beyond the end of a fairy tale and sees its true terrors."

Dream sequences are enclosed in other dream sequences before the heroine of the story, Rosaleen, goes into the threatening forest to meet a handsome huntsman who makes a bet that he can reach her grandmother's cottage before she can. According to everybody involved with the film, it works on a multitude of levels where reality and imagination increasingly blur.

The climax of THE COMPANY OF WOLVES involves a shocking state-of-the-art metamorphosis of a man into a wolf along the lines of AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON, and THE HOWLING. Mention those two films to Chris Tucker though, and watch the sparks fly!

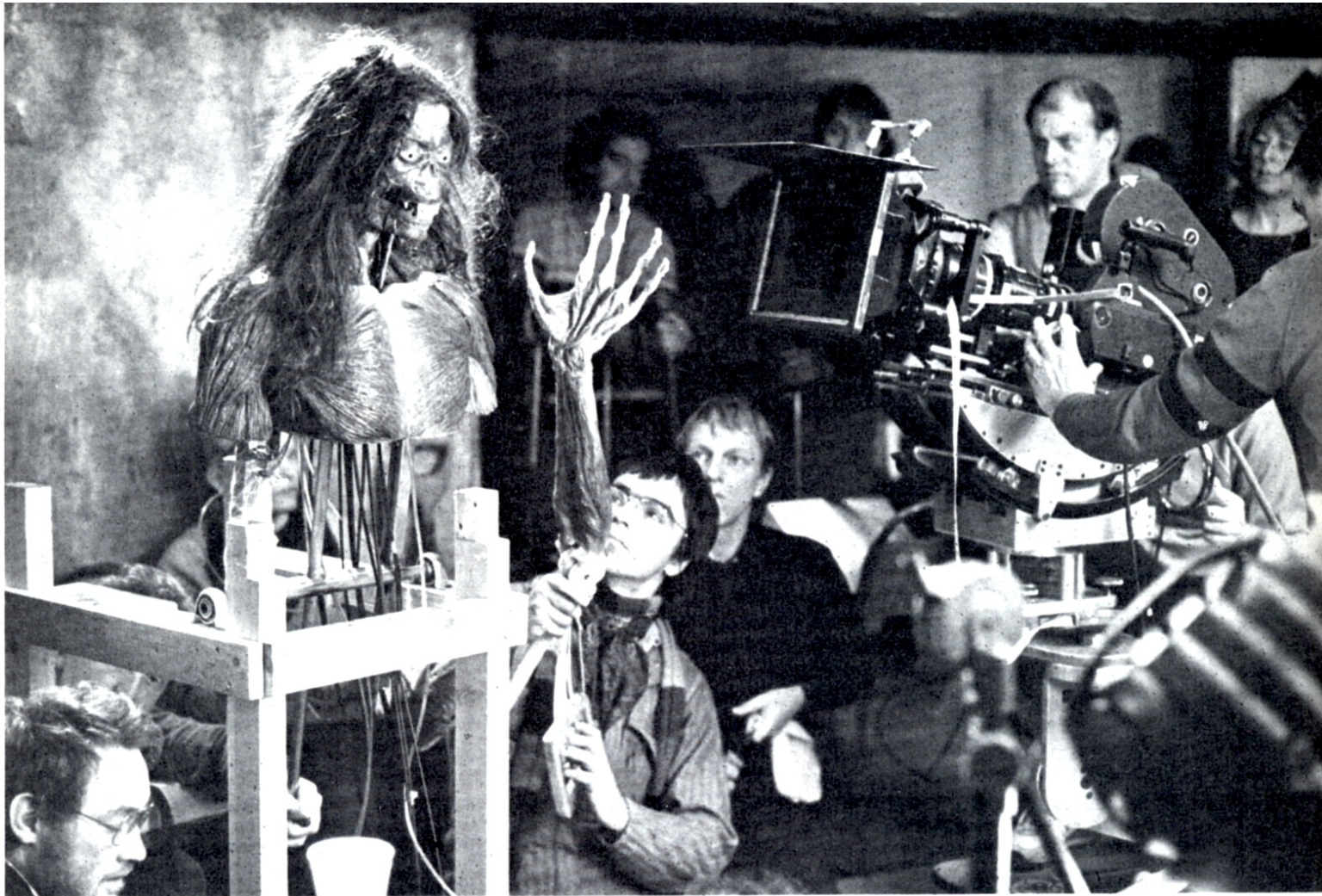
"COMPANY is nothing like those two movies," he said emphatically. "Here we are dealing with men turning into wolves on all fours—not werewolves or wolfmen. I'm not interested in doing anything that's been done before. I want to break new ground. I've cut down on a lot of the stuff you've seen before, like hair sprouting on legs because I want this film to be a totally new experience."

Even so, Tucker has had a lot of difficulty in keeping up with the main unit's shooting. It really is as Tucker said, "Live wolves don't read scripts." And he is fully aware of trying to do too much in such a short space of time. He cites the film's ultimate transformations as a case in point.





Above: Makeup effects artist Christopher Tucker checks the mechanics for the film's ultimate man-into-wolf sequence that serves as its climax. Left: Tucker puts the finishing touches on a stylized Grandma wolf for one of the film's many dream sequences. Right: Tucker fits a makeup appliance to the film's woodsman, who turns into a wolf himself in a grisly sequence in which he agonizingly rips the flesh from his slowly metamorphosing face. Tucker's effects are glimpsed only fleetingly in the finished film.



"This is the scene where a wolf's snout emerges through the mouth of the hunter. That scene had to be filmed at the dress rehearsal in case anything went wrong. The eyes were radio controlled and there were so many cables down the dummy's throat that at one stage it didn't look like the mechanisms would fit. The original idea was to have the whole hunter's face turn inside out to become a wolf, but it was impossible to do on schedule. To push the mechanism back in the mouth without splitting the

skin needed a lot of surgical jelly as it was. THE ELEPHANT MAN was difficult enough, but this posed a whole new set of problems."

To make sure that other major effects were done on time Tucker found that he had to contract out the building of a full-scale mechanical wolf. Ex-journalist and cinema manager Stephen Woolley (COMPANY's producer) has also been feeling the pinch.

"Tucker was the first person we went to," said Woolley. "Only three people have been involved in

this project as long as my co-producer Chris Brown, and I have. They are: Neil Jordan, Anton Furst, our production designer who worked on ALIEN and FLASH GORDON, and Chris Tucker. I'll admit he has a pittance for what he's trying to do, which, let's be honest, is outdo Rick Baker and Rob Bottin.

"We realized special effects would be one of our most costly areas," continued Woolley. "We isolated the effects and story-boarded the entire film; not once,

but twice. Chris Hobbs (XTRO), did one set so that when we went to Tucker we could confront him with concrete ideas, not nebulous ones. Tucker's side of the story is that he doesn't have enough money. Ours is, we told him last August how much he could spend. That is the producer's dilemma. Once a price has been agreed upon, you expect it to be done for that."

Summed up Woolley, "as a first time producer, it has been an eye-opener to see all the grime and toughness that is necessary to get a

Left: One of director Neil Jordan's haunting dream sequences. Right: Rosaleen (Sarah Patterson) is told to beware of wolves by grandmother Angela Lansbury.





Behind-the-scenes (left) at Christopher Tucker's Shepperton Studio workshop during the filming of mechanics for the woodsman's wolf transformation (above)

film right. Animals, children, and special effects are one heluva package I can tell you. This is the hardest thing I've ever done in my life. I've had ulcers, nightmares, the whole works."

Palace entered the fraught area of film production mainly because they wanted worldwide copyrights. Palace felt they couldn't compete with the majors for distribution deals in the various global film markets. Woolley explains the genesis of *THE COMPANY OF WOLVES* this way.

"Neil Jordan brought the project to me when initial backing fell through with Channel 4. I felt it was a good idea but there was no escaping the fact that the story was only three pages long. Angela Carter agreed to expand it, but we had budgeted it to a point where Channel 4 had to drop out, so we went looking for a co-production deal. E.M.I. and I.T.C. were the main competitors for the film, but as E.M.I. couldn't give us the distribution rights for the U.K. we opted for I.T.C., which was a very wise choice, in retrospect. They have been tremendously supportive. The National Film Finance Corporation was involved, but we couldn't wait around for it as we had spent nearly £70,000 in development, and the film had to go."

At a final cost of £1½ million, *THE COMPANY OF WOLVES* does represent an enormous gam-

ble for Woolley and company. They have hedged their bets somewhat by spearheading their production schedule with a genre film, still one of the most bankable commodities around.

"So what do you want us to do," said Woolley defensively. "Please don't categorize it as a horror movie either, because in the purest sense I don't think it is. Horror movies tend to fall into two categories these days. They are either the *FRIDAY THE 13TH* type, or *THE THING* type. One is extremely nasty and the other goes overboard with special effects. If you try and straddle those two aspects, as I think Schrader's *CAT PEOPLE* did, and aim for an intelligent horror film, you tend to fall between two stools. Whether that is the correct approach or not, it is the approach we are aiming for. We are being nasty but there is a very good reason for it."

Woolley expands further, "With *THE COMPANY OF WOLVES* we are trying to combine the wonder of *DIVA* with the imagination of *THE EVIL DEAD*. That's why there are two producers on this movie. We don't want to sacrifice the look, design, or the beauty of it for the sake of special effects. At the same time, however, just because it's going to look good, move spectacularly, and have a fabulous soundtrack by George Fenton, we don't see why it shouldn't have great special effects as well. Art movies aren't supposed to have all the modern horror trappings, so we are trying to reinvent the fantasy genre so it will be treated with the respect of something like *2001*. Angela Carter is very pleased with what we are achieving."

Because *THE COMPANY OF WOLVES* is being made by a new and young production company, Woolley is pleased with the enthusiasm everybody has been channeling into it. "It's an exciting experience for all concerned," he said. "Everybody has been putting in that extra 10% that you often can't expect. There's the working 'til midnight and still getting in at 5



One of the film's real wolves on a stylized village set built at Shepperton Studios.

o'clock in the morning, after waking at 3 a.m. to scribble down notes. We're pushing everyone harder than they've ever been pushed before. Director Mike Hodges visited the set the other day and we asked him to estimate the cost of the forest set we have built on one of the soundstages. He said \$150,000. In actuality it cost a tenth of that because everyone from the polystyrene artists on up feel the same as we do about the film."

Woolley feels the simplest ideas are the ones that work best and in that respect he thinks *THE COMPANY OF WOLVES* has more in common with films like *UN CHIEN ANDALOU* and the work of director Michael Powell. "We are using all the old-fashioned tricks really," he said. This film could well have been made in 1945. There is very little cheating. For example, we have a ballet dancer playing the huntsman for the prelude to the transformation. We started shooting his bare back, as the idea was it would split open and the wolf would emerge. We discovered this guy had muscles on his back that were far better than any fake bladder effect. It was simple, natural, erotic—and effective."

With that scene as an example of

one that wasn't scripted, a major problem turned out to be dealing with the live wolves. In common with Tucker, Woolley had no idea how difficult the animals would prove to be. "The wolves were trained—to a point," he said. "What we found, however, was that they couldn't be expected to be ferocious and angry on cue. At one stage a wolf dives into a pit after a live duck and then tries to claw itself out. You can't use a real duck because of regulations, so when you take the bird away, you are left with a mean, wild animal cheated of its prey. Even so, we did manage to capture the wolf shot of all time for this film. It's where Sarah Patterson has to be friendly and is licked by one of them. That made up for all the disappointment."

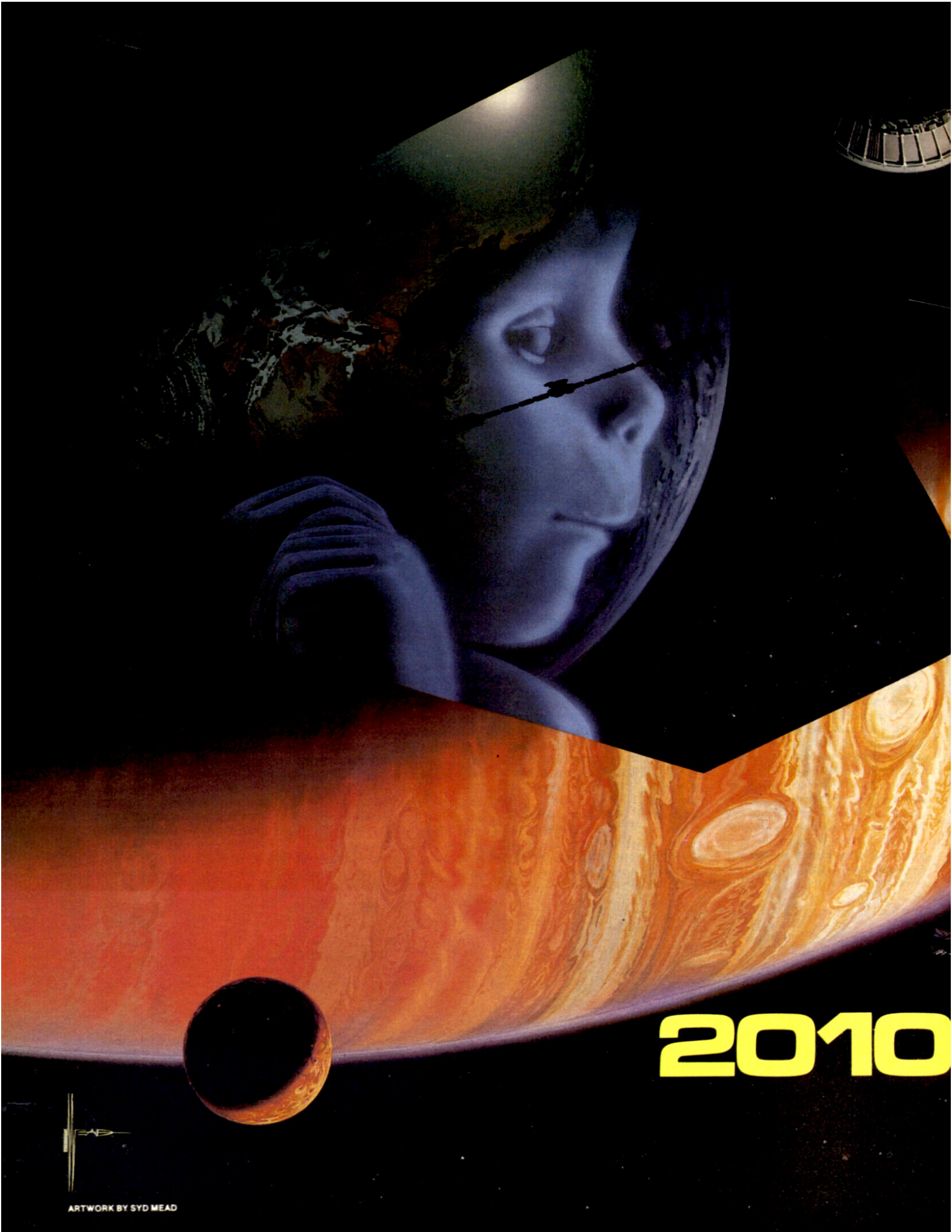
*THE COMPANY OF WOLVES* was released in Britain in September. The rest of the world looks like it will have to wait until next year to see the film. In the final version, Christopher Tucker's makeup effects have been edited down into tantalizingly brief, almost subliminal cuts.

Palace Productions' bold entry into the production arena, demonstrating the viability of low budget projects, has been called, in some quarters, "a renaissance for the British Film Industry." That assessment may not be too much of an exaggeration, according to Woolley.

"This is the way to make movies in this country," he said. "I want people to see us as pioneers in some respect. People think I'm arrogant, I know. They say, 'Who's this new boy, the slob with long hair? What does he know about movies when I've been working in this industry for 20 years, etc.' I have been getting a lot of that. Most people have responded to our naive enthusiasm, so we are building up a close circle for our next outing. I'm fully expecting to be told that we've sold out. But we don't deserve that after all the effort and hard work it has taken to get *THE COMPANY OF WOLVES* to the screen." □

Danielle Daks, a trained mime artist, as a dream sequence Wolf Woman.





2010



ARTWORK BY SYD MEAD

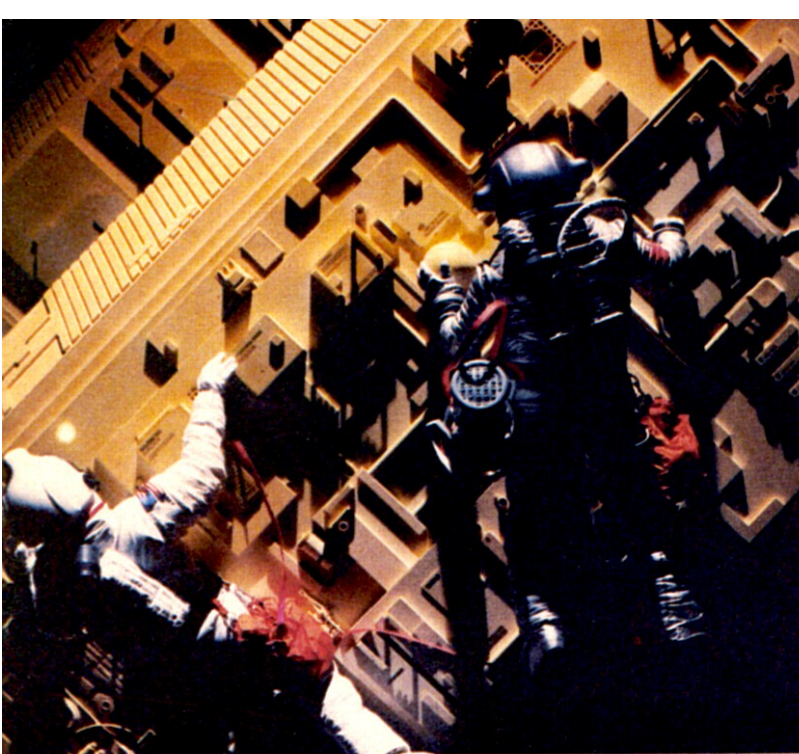




# ODYSSEY TWO

**Director Peter Hyams and production designer Albert Brenner on the sequel to Stanley Kubrick's science fiction masterpiece.**

*Preview by Kyle Counts and Charlotte Wolter*



An American and Russian scientist go EVA to repair the disabled Discovery.

One night last year, 2010 director Peter Hyams picked up the telephone to call Arthur C. Clarke. He punched a few buttons and, halfway around the world in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Clarke picked up the receiver. As they discussed the ongoing development of the screenplay Hyams was preparing based on Clarke's novel, Hyams glanced toward the television set; at that very moment, the night launch of the space shuttle was making history, and he was suddenly overwhelmed by the glorious, fiery image.

"I really kind of short-circuited," recalled Hyams. "I said, 'Arthur, you have to forgive me. I have to hang up.' I know it sounds feeble, but the whole enormity of it—picking up a little piece of plastic and getting Arthur C. Clarke in Sri Lanka, while your face is reflected in the light of the night launch of the shuttle—hit me right over the head. It was an amazing moment for me."

This same sense of wonder about the possibilities of technology suffuses 2010, Clarke's sequel to 2001. In the book, a Russian-American crew aboard the spaceship Leonov is sent to investigate the failed mission, nine years earlier, of the spacecraft Discovery, still circling Jupiter but in danger of crashing because of a rapidly degenerating orbit. They hope to examine the mysterious black monolith which shares Discovery's orbit and learn something of the fates of astronauts Dave Bowman and Frank Poole.

The film version of 2010 completed principal photography in mid-May and is planned as MGM/UA's major Christmas release. The cast includes Roy Scheider as Heywood Floyd the chief American

scientist; Helen Mirren as Russian ship captain Tanya Orlova; John Lithgow as systems analyst Walter Curnow and Bob Balaban as Chandra, the computer genius behind the design of *Hal 9000*. Seven expatriot Russian actors, including Savely Kramarov, one of the Soviet Union's most decorated actors, have been signed to portray the crew members aboard the Soviet ship, Leonov.

Hyams clearly shares Clarke's optimism and enthusiasm—reverence, if you will—about man's technological inventiveness. But Clarke's view of technology goes far beyond a delight with gadgets, for he clearly believes that humankind will use it, not only to destroy, but also in the service of its highest aspirations.

Hyams' affection and admiration for Clarke and for his vision

are readily apparent. He views 2010 as "a remarkable piece of material with a wonderful and extraordinary concept, that was conceived by a man who is clearly tuned into a radio station that I can't get." He added, "We write to each other every day with our computers. We have a kind of daily dialogue in which I really try to keep him as intimately involved as possible."

"I've never really adapted a book of this importance before," Hyams continued. "I felt it was important that the intentions of the man who wrote the book, especially as he is Arthur C. Clarke, be the intentions that are realized in the film."

Kubrick, too, has been an active presence in the film's development, although Hyams was less specific about his involvement. "It's hard to quantify. He's been terrific, and so helpful. Talking to Stanley Kubrick makes you feel like you're a rookie pitcher in spring training and you have a chance to talk to Sandy Koufax. He's so interesting and knowledgeable, and so kind; it's been a real privilege."

Another source of input for Hyams' script has been the space experts at NASA and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), including Voyager mission scientist, Dr. Richard Tyrrel, who is serving as a special consultant to Hyams. Even in the two years since Clarke's novel was written, changes in technology have rendered some details of the book inaccurate. Hyams and Clarke strove to ensure that the finished script was technically as authentic and current as possible.

"Everything was checked and counter-checked," explained Hyams. "We asked things like 'how do you do this' and 'what do the shoes they wear look like' and 'how do you move in half a G as opposed to zero G'—things like that. When you look at 2001, you can clearly see the work that Kubrick did in that area, and it's one of the milestones

## LITHGOW ON 2010

*John Lithgow plays an American astronaut who attempts to repair the Discovery and match wits with HAL.*

By Dan Scapperotti

In 2010 John Lithgow, plays Walter Curnow, an American systems specialist who has the knowledge to get the abandoned Discovery, orbiting Jupiter, functional again. Curnow and his companions must face the enigmatic monolith and try to solve its riddle, until a stern warning from David Bowman plunges them into a race against time.

Lithgow is the talented character actor who was so sensational as the manic airline passenger in TWILIGHT ZONE: THE MOVIE. Most recently he appeared as the evil comic-book villain Dr. Emilio Lizardo in THE ADVENTURES OF BUCKEROO BANZAI, an offbeat fantasy film that got lost in the summer's genre film shuffle.

of the film."

"One thing that made 2001 so extraordinary, and that, to me, is so extraordinary about 2010, is the sense that it's feasible," Hyams offered. "There is an enormous plausibility about Arthur's writing. You don't come away from 2001 or 2010 with the feeling that you've gone on some wonderful fantasy. You come away feeling you've glimpsed a possible future."

As he attended to the accuracy of the film's technical details, Hyams also had to wrestle with what he





Lithgow as American engineer Curnow, with Bob Balaban and



Roy Scheider (left) on board the Russian ship Leonov.

A key scene in 2010 requires Lithgow as Curnow and his Russian counterpart Max Brailovsky (Elliott Baskin) to take a space walk and transfer to the disabled Discovery ship. "I have to walk weightless through space," said Lithgow. "It's a very tense, long sequence, and I freak out because I'm not accustomed to this astronaut behavior. I'm a space mechanic and rocketry expert who has never been in space before. I almost blow it because of sheer panic."

The space walk scene, which required Lithgow to act with his entire body, was one of the deciding factors in his acceptance of the role. The live

action was filmed on Stage 30 on the MGM lot, but on screen will be a composition of both live action and special effects. Richard Edlund is supervising the effects work at his studio in Marina Del Rey.

"They've got models of the spaceships and models of me in three different sizes," said Lithgow. "There were massive models of the spaceships on stage 30. We had to perform all sorts of stuff in front of blue screen. They'll matte in photos of Jupiter and the other planets as we float through space."

In 2010, the Russians and Americans pool their resources in an

uncharacteristic display of cooperation. They launch the Russian spacecraft Leonov in a bid to recover the Discovery which has been in orbit near Jupiter since it was abandoned by David Bowman nine years before, but now is in danger of being destroyed or salvaged by another power. The Leonov and her bi-national crew face, not only the dangers inherent in interstellar flight but the question of how HAL, the murderous, malfunctioning computer aboard Discovery will react when it is re-awakened for the return flight to earth.

The film, like its source novel, is an interpersonal story as well as a

rousing space adventure. The characters from differing ideologies, with a mutual respect for each other must maintain their nationalism even as they cooperate and draw together sharing their hopes and fears.

"In one sequence which took us from the Leonov to the Discovery there must have been seven or eight different ways in which they shot us," said Lithgow. "They shot us upside down at one point. They shot us flying right side up. They placed us on a lazy Susan and shot closeups of us just floating around. They rotated the camera and they rotated the lights."

continued on page 57

referred to as "the whole conundrum of design"—a multifold problem. "Not only did it have to look interesting, it also had to look possible and have emotion to it," said Hyams. "And, it had to look individual."

Hyams worked closely with production designer Albert Brenner and visual consultant Syd Mead to create an original visual style for 2010. Mead was hired to design the details of all of the Leonov's control panels, as well as the Russian ship's exterior. "You almost con-

sciously reject things you love because they've been done," said Hyams of the designs. "Syd is one of those people who, if you ask 'What is this navigational panel going to look like, what will the drinking glass look like or what is the state-of-the-art of a straw, how do you pour liquid when there's no gravity,' he can do it."

Production designer Brenner met Hyams on T.R. BASKIN (for which Hyams wrote the screenplay) and most recently worked with the director on CAPRICORN

ONE. Brenner's duties on 2010 included re-creating portions of the Discovery, an assignment complicated by the fact that Kubrick apparently destroyed all existing drawings and blueprints after 2001 completed production. Brenner and his assistants solved the problem by enlarging selected frames from a 70mm print of 2001. But one complication remained.

"Kubrick used wide-angle lenses throughout the film, which distorted the proportions of the objects in the frames completely,"

explained Brenner. "If there was a figure in the frame, we could judge the height and width of the set based on that. Otherwise, we had to find something that we could relate to human size—a doorknob, a light switch or something else—and *guesstimate* from that point on."

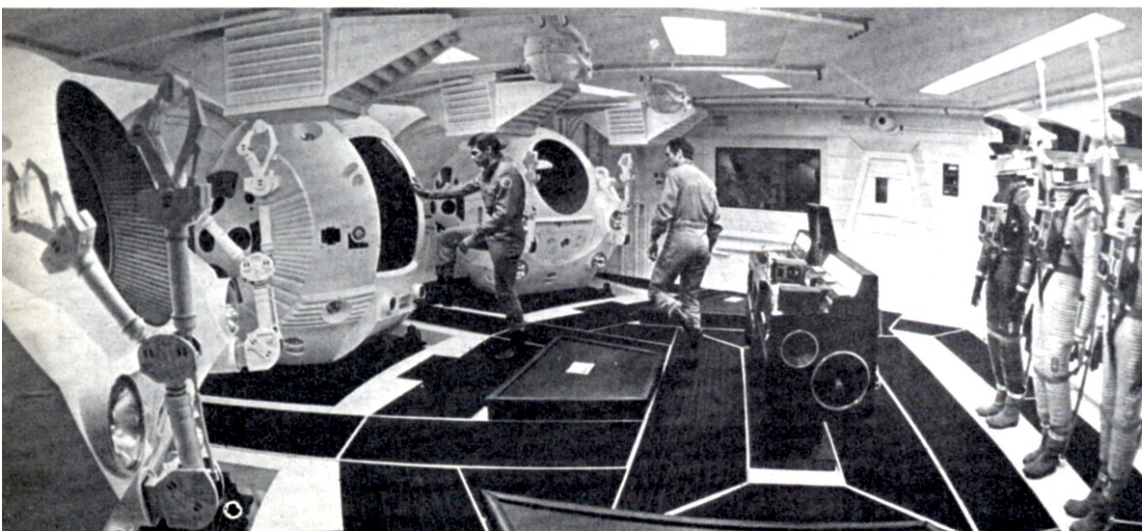
The script, as Hyams wrote it, did not require that Brenner recreate all of Discovery's interiors. What it did require was a part of the ship's flight deck and exterior hull, the airlock whose hatch Bowman blew to get into the ship at the end of 2001, the adjoining pod bay, and HAL the computer—as well as the anteroom outside the pod bay and the 'red' set where Keir Dullea as Bowman lobotomized HAL.

Since the amount of money allotted for the two ships was a total of \$1.4 million, Brenner economized on the Discovery sets in order to reserve sufficient capital for the more elaborate sets for the Russian ship. The reproduction of the pod that still stands, sans hatch, in the Discovery, was carved out of styrofoam, painted to match the original as closely as possible. Like the pod bay in which it rests, Brenner created an impression of authenticity without slaving over the fine details. He would not be at all surprised, however, to hear from some eagle-eyed 2001 fan that a latch or grill was not in its proper place.

"The public's visual space language has so advanced with JEDI

continued on page 53

Left: Director Peter Hyams and astronaut Bob Balaban on production designer Albert Brenner's reconstruction of the pod bay set of the Discovery. Below: A reverse angle of the same set as seen in Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY, as astronauts Poole (Gary Lockwood) and Bowman (Keir Dullea) prepare to enter one of the EVA pods to talk in secret about HAL.



# COMING

## NIGHT OF THE COMET

*It's the end of the world, but these girls just want to have fun.*

### By Kyle Counts

Ask writer-director Thomas Eberhardt (SOLE SURVIVOR) about his latest genre offering, NIGHT OF THE COMET, and he'll be agreeably chatty about any number of the film's components: the actors, the script's conception, how he managed to squeeze some impressive special effects into a budget that was low even by television standards. Just don't ask him to pigeonhole the film.

Yes, it's a science fiction-oriented action film about the after-effects of a comet that pulls the Earth out of its orbit, but it's just as much an adolescent fantasy about two sisters who survive the holocaust. Its hi-tech look and quirky pop edge have led some to dub it a "New Wave Comedy," but it's also a mature look at the apocalypse, with some gentle moments and a thread of social satire running throughout its witty screenplay.

Eberhardt is understandably hesitant to casually define the tone of the film—scheduled by Atlantic Releasing for a tentative November debut—lest someone get the erroneous impression that it is funny-scary in the style of AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON, or gritty-downbeat-funky a la the tripped-out LIQUID SKY. A rough, two-minute trailer he composed during post-production may be as close as he will ever come to committing himself: it emphasizes the girls' story as "their adventures at the end of their world," and ambiguously intones, "it (the comet) was the last thing on Earth they ever expected." (An associate suggested the print copy should read: "It was the end of the world, but it

The effect of a comet passing close to earth turns the police into scary beings, prosthetic makeup by Dave Miller.



could have been worse.")

Eberhardt, who wrote and directed several award-winning documentaries for public television and "After School" specials for various companies, got the idea for NIGHT OF THE COMET during his discussions with a few of the 12 and 13 year-old kids he worked with on one of the specials. "The end of the world is heavy on their minds," Eberhardt explained. "Their vision of the apocalypse was such a straight and narrow, teenage view of things. One girl imagined that everyone was gone; the city was empty. Her fantasy was that she and a couple of close friends survived—everybody she didn't like had perished, of course—and they had the entire city to themselves."

The story, set in modern-day Los Angeles and the surrounding suburbs at Christmas, begins with the arrival of a blazing comet. But like the spectacular light show the English skywatchers witness in DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS (one of the roots of the story, Eberhardt said), only to wake up blind the next morning, the after-effects of the phenomena prove devastating: anyone in direct contact with the comet is reduced to calcium dust within hours. The only people who survive are second-hand exposure victims—who slowly disintegrate and take on the behavior of rabid animals—and those who have been shielded from the comet's fallout by steel, which apparently blocks the comet's harmful radioactive rays.

As luck (and convenient plotting) would have it, siblings Samantha (Kelli Maroney of FAST TIMES AT RIDGEMONT HIGH) and Reggie (THE LAST STARFIGHTER's Catherine Mary Stewart) have spent the NIGHT OF THE COMET encased in steel surroundings—Sam in a garden shed after a fight with her evil stepmother (Sharon Farrell), and Reggie in a projection booth with her boyfriend at the local theatre where she works.

Sam and Reggie are far from the genre's standard of passive, shriek-happy heroines. Raised by a military father (Eberhardt himself appears in mantle photos as the proud papa), both are fiesty, handy with firearms and skilled in the art of self-defense. When Reggie comes face-to-face with a mutated local (one of several prosthetic make-ups created by Dave Miller), she effortlessly subdues him and jumps aboard a motorcycle to make her getaway. En route home, the deserted city streets and abandoned cars clue her in that this is no ordinary Christmas morning.

In creating the look of NIGHT OF



Catherine Mary Stewart (right) finds herself one of the last women on earth. Inset: Kelli Maroney, ready for the end of the world.



THE COMET with director of photography Arthur Albert, Eberhardt sought the same kind of 'empty cities' quality as found in the 1954 B-classic, TARGET EARTH, another of the film's pulp sources. Eberhardt tried, unsuccessfully, to obtain the rights to TARGET EARTH, hoping to use a clip from it in a movie theatre sequence and then take Reggie and Sam past some of the same locations Richard Denning wanders through.

Sam and Reggie go exploring in the ghostly city, meeting up with other survivors like Hispanic truck-driver Hector (Robert Beltran, Raoul in EATING RAOUL), two young children and a group of scientists (led by Clint Eastwood regular Geoffrey Lewis and Mary Woronov, also of RAOUL), who prove not to be as benevolent as they first appear. At one point, in an attempt to elevate their spirits after realizing all their friends are gone, the girls embark on a shopping spree at a posh Bullock's-Wilshire department store, a light-hearted moment done to the strains of "Girls Just Want to Have Fun."

Eberhardt cautions audiences not to expect a heavy special effects film when they come to see NIGHT OF THE COMET, although there will be effects work (handled by John Muto and Ted Rae, former Private Stock Effects employees who worked on SLAPSTICK and JAWS 3-D). "It's more of a heavy-premise, heavy action movie," he explained. "We have dream sequences and zombies and trick shots, but the magic of the film is the chemistry between Kelli and Catherine. You really care about their characters. The whole movie is a metaphor for growing up."

John Muto was hired to work on

NIGHT OF THE COMET as production designer, but with a varied background at his disposal, found himself also designing visual effects, directing second unit, and even getting involved in the film's costuming. He shares credit with Ted Rae on the effects design, with Rae the engineering brains behind the execution of the film's intricate optical shots, involving both miniatures, matte paintings and inexpensively-constructed sets (such as an underground scientific complex, erected on the largest sound stage at Raleigh Studios).

For the arrival of the comet, Muto has in mind a "very beautiful lens flare," captured on a computerized animation stand with a starfield behind it, that leaves behind it metallic particles that arrange themselves into the film's title. There will also be slit scan and time lapse photography of the city picking up the charge of the comet and lighting up like neon.

Eberhardt isn't bothered by criticism that he is showing an unrealistically pristine vision of the end of the world, one not concerned with real possibilities like gas fires, looting and slow death by radiation poisoning. His response to such logical demands is a curt, "who cares? This movie is much like THE BLUE LAGOON, another dyed-in-the-wool fantasy," he said. "Two kids in that situation would have died rather gruesome deaths in a short time."

What Eberhardt does offer, he says, is a consistency of vision. "There is no last-minute rescue by adults, no cop-out ending that it was all a dream. We have a sweet ending, as a matter of fact, one which I like a lot."

continued on page 51

SHORT TAKES

The lawsuit brought against Lucasfilm by California model-maker Lee Seiler (14:4/14:5:11) has stalled in San Francisco U.S. District Court. Attorneys for **George Lucas**, who was present daily at court, were unsuccessful in having Lucas removed as defendant. After two weeks of preliminary hearings and jury selection, the trial now awaits bench rulings on the admission of evidence.

**LABYRINTH** has been scripted for Jim Henson by Monty Python alumnus Terry Jones. A "whimsical, gothic fantasy," the film is *not* a follow-up to **THE DARK CRYSTAL** though Brian Froud encores as production designer. It's a puppet film, but this time Henson plans to include human characters.

Gene Simmons, lead singer of "Kiss" makes his film debut as an actor in Michael Crichton's **RUNAWAY**, for release by Tri-Star December 14. Simmons, who published a science fiction fanzine called "Cosmostilto" as a teenager, stars as the villain of the near-future tale about renegade robots.

Tina Turner, the Acid Queen of Ken Russell's **TOMMY**, stars as the villainess opposite Mel Gibson in **MAD MAX III**. Location filming in Australia is planned for the George Miller production, to be co-directed by Miller (handling action scenes) and George Ogilvie. The big-budget production (rumored at \$13 million) is a follow-up to **THE ROAD WARRIOR**. Besides Gibson as Max, Bruce Spence returns as the wacky Gyo Captain.

Paramount Pictures is said to have put **STAR TREK IV** on hold due to excessive salary demands by William Shatner... **NEVER SAY NEVER AGAIN** producer Jack Schwartzman has two science fiction projects in preparation. **HYPER-SAPIEN**, to be directed by Michael Wadleigh and **THE STARS MY DESTINATION**, based on the Alfred Bester classic. At one time a pet project of John Carpenter's, scripted by Lorenzo Semple Jr., Schwartzman has the project budgeted at \$30 million with a September 1985 start date.

Oscar-winning special effects supervisor **Brian Johnson** will direct an undisclosed project for Bernd Eichinger's Constantin Films. Johnson supervised the effects for Eichinger's **THE NEVERENDING STORY** and has signed-on to do effects for Constantin's space mystery-thriller **TELEPATHY**.

HAMMER MYSTERY AND SUSPENSE

A new video series from the famed producer of British horror films.

By Alan Jones

"All the Hammer content the fans are expecting—minus the blood and gore" is promised by Hammer Films co-owner, and producer, Roy Skeggs in their new television series, **THE HAMMER HOUSE OF MYSTERY AND SUSPENSE**. Financed by 20th Century Fox, the 13 feature-length episodes began shooting entirely on location in England at the end of last year with directors John Hough and Peter Sasdy working back to back on the first six. Other directors lined-up by Skeggs are Val Guest, Alan Gibson, Tom Clegg, and Gabrielle Beaumont.

"Each story was selected to highlight mystery and suspense—as the title says—more than the usual brand of Hammer horror on the insistence of Fox," said Skeggs. "They wanted Hammer product, and our reputation guaranteed them quality, to fit into a primetime viewing slot."

The British Hammer company was once the world's leading producer of horror films, creators of the popular *Dracula* and *Frankenstein* films which made stars of both Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing. The company has been increasingly inactive since the mid-70's, but Skeggs dismisses the thought that the company may have missed the boat in not cashing-in on the recent trend in graphic horror, a trend spawned in part by Hammer.

"Horror has taken on a new connotation these days," said Skeggs. "Hammer films to me were like Walt Disney with blood. You certainly can't say that about the more recent efforts in the genre. Hammer made horror films well and their reputation is still second to none."

Skeggs wanted to keep the 60 minute format of the company's previous series, **THE HAMMER HOUSE OF HORROR**, for the new show. "Fox had a meeting with their vast network of global salesman and decided a fea-



Christina Raines becomes an unwilling blood donor in "The Late Nancy Irving."

ture-length slot was only right for the Hammer name," said Skeggs.

After trying to extend some leftover scripts from the earlier ill-fated Hammer series, Skeggs decided it couldn't be done without losing their inherent quality. So he dumped the lot and started again. "And we had 240 submissions of 4-6 page synopses," he said. "Anything we liked we developed, although it is mainly big name writers again, so there are precious few new writers on the series. Brian Clemens has written two. So has Dennis Spooner. And Michael J. Bird, who wrote one of the stories for the **JOURNEY TO THE UNKNOWN** series we made for Fox years ago."

As much as possible Skeggs has been trying to reassemble the old Hammer crews as well as employing the company's veteran directors. "Christopher Lee was pencilled in for one story but eventually prior commitments clashed," said Skeggs. "There isn't anything here for Peter Cushing, more's the pity."

Titles in the series include "Czech Mate," the first episode filmed, concerning an intricate undercover plot devised by British Intelligence to use the lives of ordinary people, one being Susan George, to achieve their aims. Other episodes, in order of filming, include: "Sweet Scent of Death," with Shirley Knight under threat by a mysterious stranger from the past; "The Late Nancy Irving," described by Skeggs as a hi-tech *Dracula* tale; "A Distant Scream," with David Caradine playing a dual role; "In Possession," charting the eerie course of events of a haunting from the future; "Black Carrion," with Season Hubley and Leigh Lawson in a search of a top ten duo who disappeared in the '60's; "The Last Video and Testament" with Deborah Raffin; and "The Haunted Tennis Court," the only episode with effects.

"We are committed to one Ameri-

can television name per episode," said Skeggs, whose major aim with the series is to glue audiences to their television sets until the last reel of film. "And I think we have succeeded. They are all strong scripts with a good twist. They are as near Hammer as possible without going all the way."

Budgeted at less than £4 million for the entire series, there's no doubt at all that Skeggs is watching the pennies. "When you consider we are talking about nearly 20 hours of television, you can appreciate the miracles we are working," said Skeggs. "We are nearly halfway through our schedule and we are holding well. That's why everything is being done on location because the cost of construction is so astronomical."

The episodes have a 13 day shooting schedule. If any director goes over that the show is put in the hands of a second unit. "We are always trying to work on the basis of delivering one episode, having two in pre-production and two at the casting level. It is certainly a long day," said Skeggs.

Thus far, the series has gone unsold in television markets in both Britain and the United States, though the series is being made available on video cassette in England. Fox has options for 26 more episodes. And Hammer still has plans to reenter the theatrical market.

"At the moment we are discussing a package of six feature films with a major studio—although they aren't all horror films," said Skeggs. "When the time is right, we will go into production. Hammer is definitely looking forward not backward."

When asked if one of these productions will be a rumored new *Dracula* film, Skeggs would only say, "we have a script with an American agent at the moment who likes it a lot. It's based on *Vlad the Impaler*, and called, **DRACULA—THE BEGINNING**." □

Susan George is an unwitting pawn of British Intelligence in "Czech Mate."



# STARMAN

John Carpenter's alien-on-the-run is up against stiff Xmas competition.

By Patrick Hobby

Columbia Pictures is being very quiet about its new \$20 million plus John Carpenter film, *STARMAN*, which is set for release December 14. Columbia is worried about competing with the more eagerly anticipated Christmas releases of *DUNE* and 2010: *ODYSSEY TWO*, which have the kind of built in publicity that press agents love.

*STARMAN* is said to be Carpenter's most spectacular, with an ending set at a picturesque landmark ala *CLOSE ENCOUNTERS*, this time at Meteor Crater National Park. Carpenter shot the movie last spring, roaming locations stretching from Tennessee to Las Vegas. Bad weather is said to have wasted valuable shooting time and put the film considerably over budget.

The story by Dean Riesner centers on an alien anthropologist whose one-man exploration ship, crippled by a US air defense missile, crashes in Wisconsin. The alien escapes with seven emergency blue power spheres



John Carpenter

and stumbles upon the cabin of Jenny Hayden (Karen Allen), a young widow mourning the recent loss of her husband, Jeff Bridges. After breaking into Allen's house, the alien finds a lock of Jeff Bridges' hair taped to his picture, cracks the molecular DNA structure, and starts altering its body to match Bridges. Allen gets up and finds a writhing, glowing, quickly growing figure that becomes the perfect replica of her dead husband. (Stan Winston, Rick Baker, and Dick Smith share the credit for the transformations which relies heavily on prosthetic limbs.)

With only three days to reach Arizona from Wisconsin, the alien forces Allen to help him make it there. Not only is three days just about as long as the alien can stay alive in his foreign body, but, the US government is hot on his trail in the form of dark-suited agents Richard Jaeckel and Charles Martin Smith, a *BIG CHILL* generation scientist who winds up helping Bridges from afar.

*STARMAN* leaves happily, though Allen is left pregnant (she's sterile at the film's beginning) with Bridges' child, who "will know everything he knows," and with one remaining power sphere. A perfect lead-in for a sequel if *STARMAN* is generously received by the Christmas boxoffice crowd. □

## THE SCORE / Bernstein Busts Ghosts, Knocks Rock

By Randall D. Larson

The images are equally comical: a towering, plodding incarnation of cosmic evil emerges from Manhattan's shadowed skyscrapers, a childish grin on its puffy, marshmallow face, and a tilted sailor's cap on its domed head. A hairy alien waddles from the darkness of a Bronson Canyon cave to eradicate Earth's final residents, intoning dismal threats from within the deep-sea diving helmet worn over its gorilla body.

The films are thirty years apart, vastly different in scope, style and technology, but they are both brimming with hilarity and riotous fun. One intentionally so, its earlier relative was instead the comical result of mindless, low-budget filmmaking. It may seem slightly strained to compare *GHOSTBUSTERS* with 1953's *ROBOT MONSTER*, but there is an important connection. Both films were scored by Elmer Bernstein, one of the film industry's ablest creators of movie music.

Bernstein had come to Hollywood in 1950 from New York, where he had pursued a career as a concert pianist. After gaining several low-budget films under his baton, Bernstein achieved prominence in 1955 when he composed the expansive music for DeMille's lavish *THE TEN COMMANDMENTS*. Bernstein went on to further acclaim with his innovative use of modern jazz in Otto Preminger's *THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN ARM*, and in the 60's became popular as a composer for Westerns after the success of *THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN*.

Bernstein is also one of the most articulate of composers on the subject of film music. In addition to a presidency of The Screen Composers Guild in the 70's, Bernstein founded the (now defunct) Film-music Collection in 1974, respected for its scholarly film music journal and the first-time recording of many sought-after film scores.

Bernstein composed relatively few science fiction films until the 80's, when in rapid succession he provided notable symphonic music for *SATURN 3*, *HEAVY METAL*, *AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON*, *SPACEHUNTER*, and the orchestral score for Michael Jackson's *THRILLER* video.

Besides *ROBOT MONSTER*, Bernstein also scored *CATWOMEN OF THE MOON* in 1953; both these films are considered to be among the worst ever made. Bernstein's music managed to shine through their squeaky, papier mache props and ludicrous non-acting.



Film composer Elmer Bernstein

"Those were very important pictures for me," Bernstein recalled. "That was a difficult time. I had started out well in the business when I first came here, and I just fell on lean times. I was doing those films because they were the only kinds of films I could do!"

Rather than moping over the quality of the assignment, Bernstein found in these films the opportunity to try new approaches. "I was disappointed that this was the best kind of film I could get, but they were important experimentally for me. I was fooling around with electronics a lot back then, using the Hammond organ and the Novachord." For *ROBOT MONSTER* Bernstein mixed innovative electronics with a jangly, avant-garde piano, brass and percussion score.

*GHOSTBUSTERS* marks Bernstein's sixth collaboration with producer/director Ivan Reitman. The two met while Bernstein was composing for John Landis's *ANIMAL HOUSE*, for which Reitman was an associate producer. Two years later, Reitman was putting together a comedy film called *MEATBALLS*, and had Bernstein compose the score. "It was a little film and I took a chance on it," Bernstein said. "Reitman didn't have the money to pay me but I had great faith in his ability and his talent, and I loved the film." Their subsequent association resulted in a number of effective scores, including the militaristic *STRIPES*, the sweeping and lyrical orchestral moments of *HEAVY METAL*, the brassy and Williams-like *SPACEHUNTER*, and now *GHOSTBUSTERS*.

Reitman, who was a music major in college (he also scored David Cronenberg's *THEY CAME FROM WITHIN*, and *RABID*, which he produced), worked closely with Bernstein in establishing the placement and atmosphere

of his music for these films. "Ivan is a very talented man when it comes to the application of music in dramatic situations," Bernstein said. In an era where most composers are handed a film at the end of post-production and told "I need the score in two weeks!", Bernstein is brought into Reitman's productions early on, in order to establish the musical design from the very start. In the case of *GHOSTBUSTERS*, Bernstein became involved before the actors were even signed.

The music for *GHOSTBUSTERS* is particularly notable in that Bernstein plays it straight, avoiding micky-mouse or cartoon music. "In the last seven years I've suddenly become the king of comedy," Bernstein remarked. "I've had, in succession, *ANIMAL HOUSE*, *MEATBALLS*, *STRIPES*, *AIRPLANE!*, and now this film. I think one of the reasons that the scores I've written for them work is that I do not denigrate the film. I don't try to do anything hokey or make the music funny. My theory is that if the comedy is working in the film, let the film do the comedy, and let the music get behind the emotion or action, so as to add another element."

The bulk of Bernstein's score surrounds the climactic scenes in which the ghostbusters wage war on the reawakened cosmic ghost, Gozer, on the roof of a Manhattan skyscraper. Bernstein treated this music in an awesome and mystical way, with majestic crescendos and brooding, suspenseful chords, dominated by strings, brass, and supplemented by three Yamaha DX-7 synthesizers. Bernstein also used a rare French instrument called the Ondes Martenot, which creates eerie sound oscillations similar to that of the theremin which was popularized in the 40's and 50's.

Oddly enough, Bernstein found the most difficult part of the composition to be creating a theme for the central characters—Bill Murray, Dan Akroyd, and Harold Ramis, the Ghostbusters. "You have to believe, along with these guys, that the ghosts really do exist. The score had to walk a very fine line. What I did was to create a kind of an 'antic' theme for them—it's kind of cute, without being really way out. The last part of the film, with the possession and the climax on top of the building, that was much easier to do, conceptually."

*GHOSTBUSTERS* is also graced with one of Bernstein's nicest love themes, a sweeping lyric for strings and woodwind, often backed by the Ondes Martenot, which underlies the relationship between Bill Murray and Sigourney Weaver. "I'm

continued on page 52

# TALES FROM THE DARKSIDE

**The filmmakers who brought you  
NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD  
tone-down their act for television.**

By Dan Scapperotti

The lure of television has finally snagged George Romero, but more surprising is that television seems ready for him. Romero and his partner Richard Rubinstein of Laurel Productions have plotted a strong growth course for the young company. Plans call for the production of upwards of three feature films each year, with television production as one of the directions in which the company wants to expand.

Executive producer Richard Rubinstein admits that they "were gun-shy of going into television. Not from first hand experience, but from what we had been told of the pitfalls of TV production." The graphic content of such Laurel theatrical hits as *DAWN OF THE DEAD* and *MARTIN* made most people question whether they "could clean up their act enough to make it acceptable to television," said Rubinstein.

Romero and Rubinstein refused to go the network route in which

the major broadcasters are involved in production almost on a line to line basis, but when the Lexington Broadcast System (LBS), a distributor of syndicated programs on a national basis, showed interest in a proposed anthology series the Laurel staff went to work. The result was the "Trick or Treat" pilot for *TALES FROM THE DARKSIDE* which aired last fall (14:2:14). The success of the pilot led to an order from Lexington for 23 more shows with running times of 21 minutes each.

"The good thing was that Lexington Broadcasting was not a producer," Rubinstein explained. They do not have a production office, they recognize our area of expertise and we recognize theirs. Whereas on the network level, decisions are made by committee. Syndication has no precedent for that kind of involvement."

Control over Laurel projects is very important to Romero and Rubinstein. The syndication route gave them the necessary freedom in their initial television outing.



George Petrie comes back from the dead in "I'll Give You a Million."

Artistic independence, however, can have its price.

"We had the opportunity to make a much bigger budget *DAY OF THE DEAD* (now in pre-production) if we conformed to the R format," said Rubinstein. "We chose to take the smaller budget and be free of any restrictions which would cause George [Romero] to have to worry about certain things. This leaves George free to focus on the picture he wants to make."

After the initial television deal was made, Romero and Rubinstein turned over the day-to-day production activities to David E. Vogel, who became the Executive in

Charge of Production. "Romero identified about fifteen stories that were right for the show and we ended up buying five out of six," said Vogel. Included in the acquisitions were stories by Robert Bloch ("A Case of the Stubborns"), Harlan Ellison ("D'Jinn, No Chaser"), and Stephen King's "Word Processor."

The constraints of scheduling the series led to setting up two production units, one filming in New York and the other in Los Angeles. The West Coast unit used a small facility in East Los Angeles, an area that the major filmmakers shy away from but which has become a

continued on page 52

Left: Brent Spiner (l) as the Reverend and Eddie Bracken, in makeup by Ed French, as Grandpa Tolliver in Robert Bloch's "A Case of the Stubborns." Right: Makeup artist Tom Savini (r) and producer Bill Teitler (l) with the creature from "Inside the Closet." In addition to creating the puppet, Savini makes his directing debut on the episode.



# THE NOAH'S ARK PRINCIPLE

West German film school graduate "brings home" elaborate effects on a low budget.

By Uwe Luserke

Germany is no stranger to space flight movies, with a heritage dating back to the '20's and director Fritz Lang. However, since World War II there have been virtually no science fiction movies about space flight made in Germany. This can be attributed largely to the high and costly standards of technical expertise associated with contemporary science fiction films.

German film companies have refused to risk investing millions of marks in a proposed science fiction project that had no boxoffice guarantees. But with the tremendous success of STAR WARS and similar space operas in Germany, the audience began to grow, and it became merely a matter of time before a German filmmaker tapped the market.



Roland Emmerich

That someone was a young script-writer, and producer-director fresh out of the German Film and TV Academy in Munich—Roland Emmerich. The film was actually part of Emmerich's course work needed for completing his degree requirement.

Emmerich literally had to beg for financing, and finally raised about 1 million marks from Solaris-Film, the academy itself, and Bernd Eichinger, head of Constantin Film Company.

Emmerich assembled a young team, and converted an unused factory hall into a studio. When filming wrapped there, the special effects were added at the large Bavaria studios in Munich, where the movie was completed in the spring.

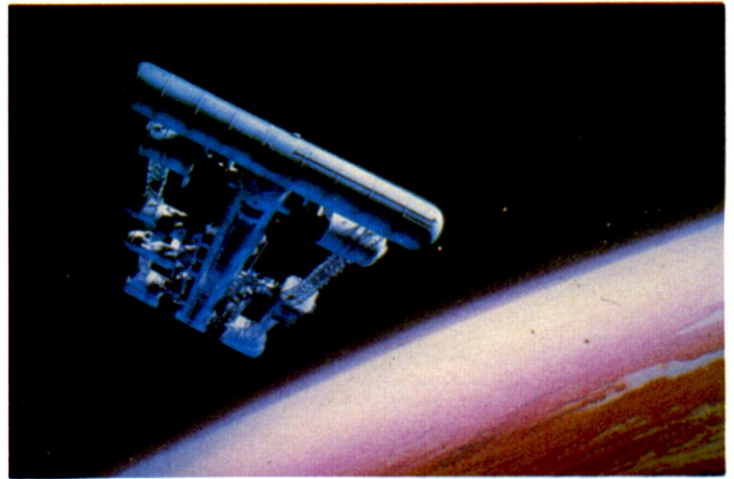
Emmerich's film was exhibited at the Berlin Film Festival earlier this year, but no plans have been made at this point for exposure in the U.S. market. Titled in Germany DAS

ARCHE-NOAH-PRINZIP (THE NOAH'S ARK PRINCIPLE) it is expected to be re-named once it reaches distribution.

If the film does reach the U.S., it's bound to evoke mixed reactions. The plot involves two European astronauts working in Arklab, a small space station mainly used for meteorological testing. The astronauts have achieved some success in weather

control, and when a political crisis turns up in Saudi Arabia, the CIA uses their installation to put a 'bad-weather-cloak' on the Saudis to cover U.S. military operations there.

When the astronauts learn of the misuse of their scientific findings they begin to fight back. The CIA sends up two additional astronauts, one armed and instructed to kill the Europeans in order to keep them quiet. A fight erupts between the



Arklab, a European orbital station that becomes embroiled in espionage and cold war politics. The special effects were filmed at Bavaria Studios in Munich.

astronauts and the CIA hit-men resulting in the astronauts' escape and return to Earth in a shuttle, where they are promptly arrested and questioned.

THE NOAH'S ARK PRINCIPLE has a very slick look despite its low budget, film school origins. Roland Emmerich has delivered some extremely believable effects, solid directing, and spectacular sound quality (dolby, of course). The good acting adds to the overall entertaining tone of the film.

THE NOAH'S ARK PRINCIPLE contains much food for thought, but

isn't as much anti-American (despite the CIA bad guys theme) as much as it's anti-militaristic. Besides offering rather pointed criticism, THE NOAH'S ARK PRINCIPLE is also a rousing adventure yarn which should appeal to the average movie goer as well as the science fiction fan. A fine renaissance for a country with a history of fantastic films.

With the success of THE NOAH'S ARK PRINCIPLE Emmerich is now planning to start his own production company, and, apart from a few short films, is planning to make a horror movie early next year. □

## DOWN THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD AND THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS



Dorothy, Bellina and Tik Tok enter the Palace of Witch Mombi in OZ.

Animatronics expert Lyle Conway has put the finishing touches on the fantasy characters for the Gary Kurtz, Walter Murch production of OZ. While completing his assignment for the film, Conway also took on the organization of the Jim Henson Creature Shop and saw through the completion of the new effects unit's first assignment, characters based on Lewis Carroll's "Alice in Wonderland" tales for Thorn-EMI's DREAM CHILD. Quipped Conway, "I got 'Through the Looking Glass' by going 'Down the Yellow Brick Road.'"

Interviewed on the set of OZ, Conway volunteered that the film's most difficult character to create was Bellina, the Yellow Hen of Oz. "It's the type of thing which almost should not be attempted," said Conway. "Real chickens have had years of practice doing this sort of thing, and audiences know how they move. Our clockwork hen has 100 moving parts inside a head the size of a walnut."

Besides using a real chicken, Bellina is actually eight different radio

controlled mechanisms, depending on the action required in a scene. Also created for the film was the Gump, a magical flying sofa which "has a dash of Mick Jagger," according to Conway, and Tik Tok, an antique robot, played by Michael Sundin of "Cats," which was the most uncomfortable to perform. In addition to these characters, Conway also fabricated the Tin Man, Cowardly Lion, and Scarecrow, which look nothing like the Judy Garland versions.

The DREAM CHILD assignment is the antithesis of OZ's big

budget production. "We created six creatures in fourteen weeks for the price of Tik Tok," said Conway. "It shows what can be accomplished on a low budget in a short period of time."

Based on a screenplay by Dennis Potter (PENNIES FROM HEAVEN), DREAM CHILD is the life story of Alice Little, the girl who inspired the Lewis Carroll stories. The film is told in flashback by Coral Browne, who plays Alice at age 80, and is directed by Gavin Millar and produced by Rick McCallum.

Conway's creatures for the film include the Mock Turtle, Mad Hatter, March Hare, Door Mouse, Caterpillar, and a 9-foot Griffin, consisting of over 1000 hand-made silk feathers. Assisting Conway were OZ alumni Neal Scanlan and Nick Rayburn (who created the closeup mechanical ape heads for GREYSTOKE).

Conway has left Henson to pursue other film assignments and is currently working with Rayburn on a Billy Ocean rock video. □

OZ effects supervisor Lyle Conway poses with the mechanical Bellina.





# CHARLES BAND— KING OF B'S

*Low budget horror, fantasy and science fiction films are booming at Band's Empire Pictures.*

By Charlotte Wolter

Charles Band likes to keep as many irons in the fire as possible. Juggling shooting schedules, sales trips to overseas film festivals, script rewrites and meetings with investors, he keeps his Empire International production company cranking out low budget potboilers and thrillers at a lightning pace.

Band and Co. are immersed in no less than five concurrent productions, including the long-delayed stop motion extravaganza, *THE PRIMEVALS* (14:3:20). Riding on the success of *METALSTORM* (his entry into last summer's 3-D derby), and *PARASITE*, Band claims to be in relative financial comfort and endowed with eager investors.

*RAGE WAR*, the jewel of Band's showcase of features, as of August was unsold in the foreign markets where he has been so successful in the past, despite Band's resourcefulness. Band had touted the film as a low-budget anthology of effects techniques, directed by seven different effects artists. *RAGE WAR* is in the can, but like many Band projects, barely resembles the original concept. The title of the film has undergone a change as well, and is now called *DIGITAL KNIGHTS*.

In addition to the four directors previously announced—Band, John Buechler, Rosemary Turko (director of *SCARRED*, featured at the Los Angeles Filmex and praised by crit-



Ratspit, a giant statue brought to life by stop-motion animator David Allen in an effects segment of Charles Bands' *DIGITAL DREAMS* also directed by Allen.

ics), and David Allen—three others. Stephen Stafford (a former television second-unit director using an assumed name because of the non-Guild status of the production), Ted Nicolaou (an experienced editor of low-budget features) and Peter Manogian (from the NYU Film School), created segments for the film.

The script (credited to Alan Actor), according to Band, "is a story of old magic versus new magic." The old magic is personified in a "bored, old magician" named *Mystema* (Richard Moll of *METALSTORM*) who kidnaps to another dimension of space and time, a young computer genius (Jeff Byron) who represents, naturally, the new magic.

Among the 'director-auteurs,' as Band termed them, scheduled to do a segment was *PRIMEVALS* creator and special effects designer David Allen, whose sequence was to be a showcase of his signature stop-motion animation techniques. In a desolate valley, Byron encounters a massive stone statue that comes to life to menace him much in the spirit of the *Talos* sequence in *JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS*.

Band's special effects sequences were to be challenges given Byron by Richard Moll. The 'challenges' are cannily tuned in to mass audience enthusiasm for violence and spectacle, with story ideas which include time travel, attacking gargoyles and "a maniacal, weird, sadistic heavy metal rock group."

Band reported that, in one segment, "famous characters from Hitler to Genghis Khan come alive out of an ice cave and do battle." Apparently, as dreams fade to reality, the plan to use a different effects technique for each segment was discarded, since most of the special effects have been done by John Buechler (*ANDROID*).

*SWORDKILL* is the title of another Band project. Best described as a hardcore urban violence saga which features a fierce Samurai frozen somehow in Japan 400 years ago and thawed out in modern day Los Angeles with advanced cryogenic techniques. He escapes to the urban jungle of downtown Los Angeles, where he proceeds to run amok and unleash his 16th century brand of mayhem on the unsuspecting inhabitants.

Another Band product, titled *GHOULIES*, a thinly disguised rip-off of *GREMLINS* scheduled for Halloween release, has just completed production. Despite wide publicity about the casting of Dodger outfielder, Mike Marshall, the baseball player was scratched from the film's lineup when he had to leave for spring training before they could get filming underway.

*GHOULIES*, under the direction of Lucca Bercovici, is the story of Jonathan (Peter Lapidus), a young man whose late father was an evil warlock. When Jonathan begins playing around with magic para-

phernalia he finds he unwittingly unleashes the ghoulies of the title.

Lapidus also summons up two little 'familiar' who help him. Jonathan throws a party for his friends and, when they decide to celebrate a ritual, his father comes out of the grave. The tone is reportedly light and comedic. "It's a lot of fun, really," said associate producer Deborah Dion. "It's got some shocks in it, the ghoulies are great, very strange little creatures." Dion described the ghoulies as elaborate, fully-articulated puppets created by John Buechler.

Not to run the risk of having "free time," Band has already started planning four new features. Other Band projects in the wings are *TROLL* (to be directed by makeup effects man John Buechler), *TRANCERS*, *TERRORVISION*, and *MANDROID* (to be called *THE ELIMINATORS* in foreign markets).

An undying optimist and obsessive worker, Band tends to rhapsodize over all his projects, but he is especially fervent about *THE PRIMEVALS*. He insists that the production, by far his most ambitious to date, is back on track after a postponement of almost five years.

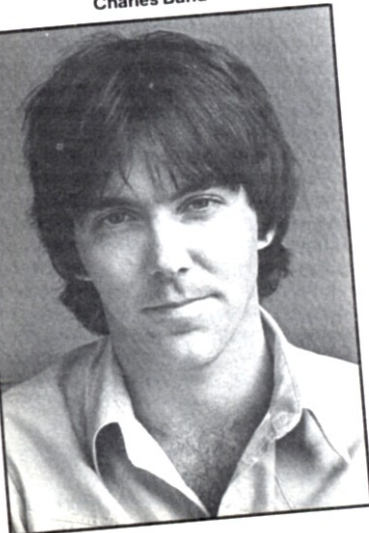
*THE PRIMEVALS* is an eagerly awaited project, because it features stop motion animation by one of the technique's acknowledged masters, David Allen. It also shows promise of storyline and character development well beyond the simple, monosyllabic efforts Band has filmed to date.

If it does reach release—still an uncertainty—*THE PRIMEVALS* will be the last of Band's current efforts to hit the theatres, as it is not scheduled to begin principal photography until late 1984. In the meantime, however, Band has more than enough projects to exhaust even his considerable energies. □

Jeffrey Byron is menaced by a makeup creation by John Buechler in a segment of Charles Band's *DIGITAL DREAMS*.



Charles Band



# THE TERMINATOR

*Arnold Schwarzenegger stars as a killing machine from the future.*

By Frederick S. Clarke

Hot on the heels of his second outing as Conan, the Barbarian, Arnold Schwarzenegger makes a change of pace in his newest film, **THE TERMINATOR**, to be released by Orion Pictures on October 26. Schwarzenegger plays a cyborg—part man, part machine—sent from the future to kill an unsuspecting young woman whose life sways the course of future history.

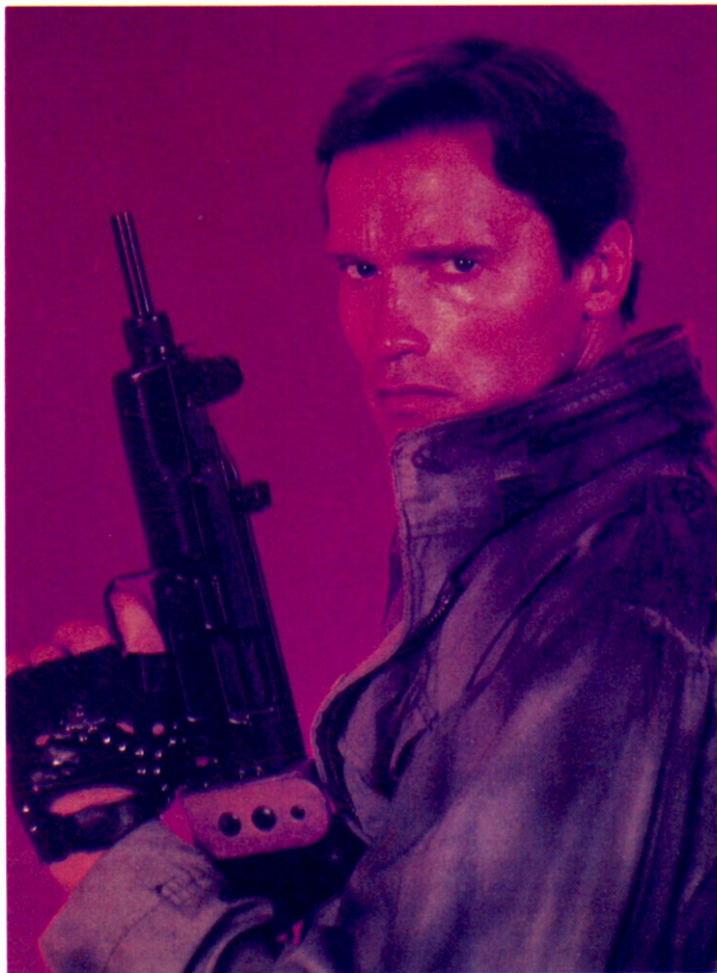
The film is directed by James Cameron (**PIRANHA II**) from a script he wrote with producer Gale Ann Hurd. Cameron came up with the idea for the film while working with Hurd at New World Pictures on **BATTLE BEYOND THE STARS**. At the time, Hurd was a production manager and Cameron served as art director and special effects photographer.

Opposing the Terminator's deadly mission is Kyle Reese, a young hardened guerrilla fighter from the future played by Michael Biehn. Reese has been sent back from the future to protect the Terminator's intended victim, played by Linda Hamilton. Biehn is best remembered as the psychotic admirer who terrorizes celebrated Broadway actress Lauren Bacall in **THE FAN**. Hamilton was seen earlier this year in **CHILDREN OF THE CORN**.

Supplying makeup for the film is former Oscar-nominee Stan Winston, who designed effects for Schwarzenegger that would give the actor the appearance of a battle-scarred machine after his deadly encounters with Reese and his futuristic weaponry. Winston also handled many of the script's mechanical effects.

Special effects coordinator for **THE TERMINATOR** is Ernie Farino, who has worked on **CAVE-MAN**, **THE HOWLING**, and **THE THING**. Cameron approached Farino to do the film's effects, and Farino brought in effects house Fantasy II to serve as a production base. In early September, Gene Warren, Les-

Schwarzenegger keeps on coming, in makeup by Oscar-nominee Stan Winston.



Arnold Schwarzenegger as **THE TERMINATOR**, a cyborg hit-man from the future.

lie Huntley and Peter Kleinow of Fantasy II were working to complete some 90 effects cuts for the picture while director James Cameron proceeded with sound mixing.

Cameron's background in effects at New World Pictures has been a plus on the project. "Most directors haven't a clue when it comes to effects," said Fantasy II chief Gene Warren. "Cameron knows what it's all about. Some of the composite shots that were designed are very effective because he knew technically what you could do and how best to use them to get the most dramatic effect."

Fantasy II worked on a major sequence set in the future at the beginning of the film involving full miniatures and miniatures composited with live action. The use of explosions and optical laser battles establishes the war-torn society that sends the Terminator back in time on his deadly mission. The company is also providing matte paintings by Ken Marshall which expand the scope of on-set and location shooting.

Warren refuses to discuss what is perhaps the company's most interest-

ing work on the project. Stop-motion animator Peter Kleinow provided eight cuts of a miniature Terminator using a detailed animation model built by Doug Beswick, matching the full scale Terminator built by Stan Winston.

The Terminator designed by Winston is described as a "robot" by the production. According to Winston the design represents one of the "changes that the Terminator goes through during the course of the film."

**THE TERMINATOR** was shot on Los Angeles locations, where a downtown restaurant was converted into a new wave nightclub called "Tech Noir." Art director George Costello used an abandoned steel mill as the set for many futuristic scenes. Also starring in the film, financed by the British Hemdale company, are Paul Winfield, Lance Henriksen, and Earl Boen.

Schwarzenegger is high on the film's action-adventure script and is delighted at the prospect of playing a villain at last. "In this one I finally get to play a real bad guy," he said. "I'm enjoying it." □

## SHORT TAKES

**PSYCHO III** is in the works at Universal. Tom Holland, who wrote the previous sequel, turned down the script assignment. Charles Pogue is preparing the screenplay instead. Pogue wrote the remake of **THE FLY**, now in pre-production at 20th Century-Fox. The studio looks to redo the story with state-of-the-art makeup.

Spotted on the walls of Richard Etlund's Boss Film Corporation were the storyboards for **POLTERGEIST II**... a reliable source at ILM passes on the information that **Ray Harryhausen** will *not* be doing his next film there, as we reported last issue... **Lucasfilm** is offering their computer animated 3-D short **THE ADVENTURES OF ANDRE AND WALLY B** to film festivals for screening. The film features classic character animation.

**SILVER BULLET**, a werewolf story written by Stephen King and illustrated by Bernie Wrightson (**CREEPSHOW**), will be filmed by Dino De Laurentiis in Wilmington, North Carolina. The modern, semi-comic story with ambitious makeup effects will be directed by Dan Attias, former second assistant director on **TWILIGHT ZONE: THE MOVIE**.

James Bond actor Sean Connery has sued film producer Albert R. "Cubby" Broccoli for profits due him on the Bond movies. Broccoli's next Bond outing, **FROM A VIEW TO KILL**, has had its title shortened to simply **A VIEW TO KILL**. Reportedly, the longer title wouldn't fit as a lyric to the theme song being composed by Duran Duran... Producer John Mantley is suing Warner Bros over the development of Isaac Asimov's **I, ROBOT**, at one time scripted by Harlan Ellison. Though Mantley optioned the property and brought it to producer Edward Lewis to develop at Warners, he claims the studio is now excluding him.

John Korty is directing **THE EWOKS MOVIE** for Lucasfilm and ABC-TV. Lucasfilm backed Korty's failed Lumage animation feature **TWICE UPON A TIME**... **Anthony Shaffer**, author of **THE WICKER MAN**, is working on a screenplay based on the life of Dracula star Bela Lugosi... Copenhagen model Brigitte Nielsen will make her film debut in the title role of Robert E. Howard's **RED SONJA**, a female Conan. The Dino De Laurentiis production began filming in Italy in September under director Richard Fleischer.



# RADIOACTIVE DREAMS

*The director of THE SWORD AND THE SORCEROR takes you on a cultural odyssey of post-nuclear America.*

by Kyle Counts

Albert Pyun's first film, *THE SWORD AND THE SORCERER*, made box office waves and instantly established him as a hot property in Hollywood. If you haven't heard much about the young director in the past two years, it's because Pyun has been busy working on his next feature, a post-nuclear fantasy-adventure tale entitled *RADIOACTIVE DREAMS*. The film is scheduled for release later this year, though a distribution deal has not yet been finalized.

*RADIOACTIVE DREAMS* follows two brothers, who emerge from a decade-long seclusion in a fallout shelter, as they explore post-nuclear America. Michael Dudikoff, the dumb jock of the ABC sitcom, *Star of the Family*, and John Stockwell, Keith Gordon's pal in *CHRISTINE*, star as the pair of wandering teen-age siblings. Also featured are Lisa Blount (*AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN*), George Kennedy and Don Murray. (According to the *Hollywood Reporter*, Roger Moore was offered a million dollars for a three-day cameo, but turned it down.)

In the prologue, set in 1986, two mysterious men are driving three year-olds Phillip and Marlowe (named by their fathers, both avid detective fans) to a bombshelter hidden high in the mountains. Just as they approach the shelter, a flash of light off in the distance signals that nuclear war has broken out. The four rush into the shelter, where they remain for five years, until one day the two men leave, locking Phillip and Marlowe in. It takes the boys ten years to dig their way out of the concrete bunker with eating utensils, at which time the naive pair set out to find their "fathers" and experience life in the year 2000—or what is left of it.

What our budding private eyes discover, through a series of action-filled adventures, is a new America, composed entirely of a series of surviving pop cultures, all of them existing within the walls of a me-

tropolis called Edge City: cannibalistic female bikers, greasers, mutant surfers, "disco" midgets (radiation has stunted their growth, making them men trapped in children's bodies), punkers, new wavers, valley girls, carnivorous hippies and bipedal reptile creatures. Run-of-the-mill people, it seems, no longer exist.

As Phillip and Marlowe have spent most of their lives in a bombshelter, and have little reference to the world beyond the 40's detective novels and film noir movie thrill-

ers left behind by their fathers, they are out of step with time in their Bogartesque manner.

"The movie is really about the two boys looking to find their identities by journeying across 40 years of mutated pop culture," said director Pyun, who wrote the script with co-producer Tom Karnowski. "This is no *PORKY*'s, about two guys venturing out to get laid. It's an odyssey, much like Dorothy's—they're thrown into a world they don't understand, and only want to get back home. Along the way to

finding their fathers, they run into a series of colorful characters."

The use of the nuclear issue as a backdrop for the film doesn't mean that *RADIOACTIVE DREAMS* will offer any heavyweight message on the controversial subject. "Our script is more concerned with the rebirth of society than with the nuclear issue itself," said Pyun. "Should man survive the holocaust, I don't think he'll necessarily turn into an animal, like in *THE DAY AFTER*. I think rather than continue to tear down, he'll immediately begin to rebuild. Fifteen years after the war, the world is coming out of its Dark Age; Phillip and Marlowe enter the city just as mankind is beginning its Renaissance."

*RADIOACTIVE DREAMS*' unusually long pre-production period was, in part, due to the challenge of acquiring financing (after *THE SWORD AND THE SORCERER*, Pyun had several offers, but wanted to work independently from the studio system) and a six-month talent search for the roles of Phillip and Marlowe. Pyun estimates that he saw over 600 young actors, striving to find two who weren't too modern-looking, and could believably carry a 40's attitude as part of their characters. During this time, Pyun and Karnowski wrote some 50 drafts of the script, began scouting locations, and dove head-long into the other crucial pre-production elements.

A visit to the production office at Laird International Studios reflects just how much work had already been done on the project (which, in Pyun's words, has a budget only "slightly larger" than the \$3.5 million spent to film *THE SWORD AND THE SORCERER*): the walls are covered with color storyboards by in-house illustrator Shawn Joyce (who will be preparing all the film's matte paintings), character sketches, blueprints of sets, and even tabletop posterboard miniatures of the hippie city square (modeled after San Francisco's

A mutant surfer, unwilling to give up his treasured pastime even though the ocean has become radioactive, one of the film's colorful post-nuclear characters.



continued on page 55

# STRANGE TANGENTS

*A former magician from Maryland turns fantasy filmmaking into a cottage industry.*

By Bill George

Filmmaking is flooded with all sorts of entrepreneurs. A common type is the amateur filmmaker who looks upon his newly-purchased light meter as if it were a faded hieroglyphic, then corrals a group of gullible friends, all starving for recognition, into making a feature-length (16mm) movie on deferment.

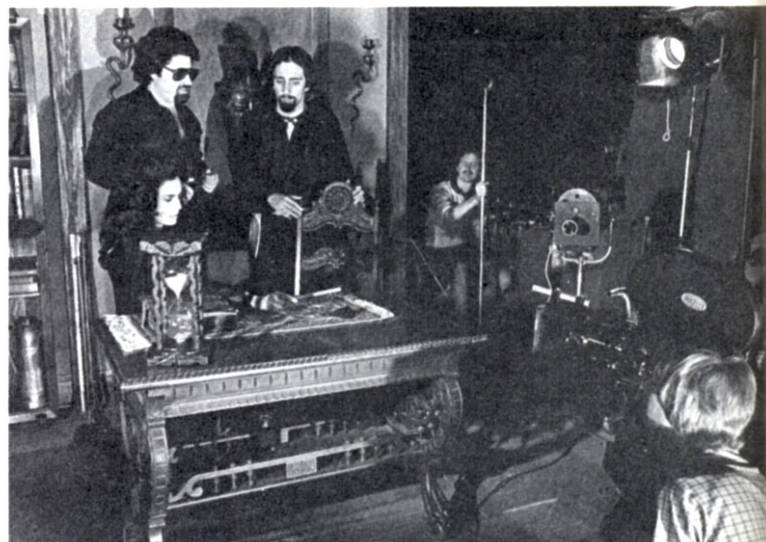
The script is non-existent, usually improvised and, judging from the blocking onscreen, probably unrehearsed. The story, imitative of professional movies, hinges on something relevant to horror and

science fiction because these are commercial genres, though the premise regarding a "thing from space" or "slasher at large" is not embellished beyond people getting blasted with a ray gun or wasted with a butcher knife. After all, lasers can be economically matted-in and entrails may be purchased with a quarter pound of ham at the grocery store.

Next step: report that the film was made for six or seven times its actual budget, launch some publicity with community newspapers, send photos (customarily spotlighting the "monster") to genre-related magazines. Result: after a procession of distributors instantly reject the finished product, the entrepreneur timidly offers his home movie to a video outlet, desperately hoping to break even on the \$25,000 provided by his investors.

Naturally, there are exceptions. Sam Riemi (*THE EVIL DEAD*) and Frank Henenlotter (*BASKET CASE*) are examples of beginners who maintain some integrity while attempting to make good 16mm movies on hard-earned, but constrictive budgets. Add director Mark Chorvinsky to those ranks. His *STRANGE TANGENTS* was made over a period of three years by an all-volunteer cast and crew at a cost estimated to be somewhere between \$50,000 and \$100,000. Chorvinsky, is mum on the exact figures, saying only, "We haven't finished paying for this film yet."

**Top Left: The Master (Irving Engelman) begins to transform into a gelatinous mass as the result of a bizarre ailment. Left: Charles Brand applies the makeup including tubes to supply a mixture of glycerin and KY jelly through the pores.**



Mark Chorvinsky (left) directs Casey Dimenico as Aria and Rick Rohan as Raven in the Wizard's Den. A stop motion character will be added later on the table-top.

The film is not a full-length feature that pauses between scenes of strutting sheriffs and scientists for gut-droppings and homemade latex monsters. It's a short subject, shot in 16mm, that could be appraised as a lightweight fantasy if Chorvinsky's intentions were less ambitious.

"I got ideas for the film over a period of about seven or eight years, some of them definitely brewing for that long," said Chorvinsky, a former magician. "This is really my first chance at doing stop motion animation. Stop motion was the reason that I got into the special effects aspect of filmmaking. I started off directing live action, and then I realized that I was mostly interested in surrealism, fantasy, science fiction, horror...genre films. To get what was on my mind on film, anything I could imagine, I figured I would have to use special effects."

Chorvinsky invested his imagination in a tale about a contemporary sorceress named Aria. She is alerted to

the fading health of her mentor, "The Master." Teleporting herself to his netherworldly mesa, she is required to summon a "power crystal," a mystical catalyst for survival. Aria enlists the services of her colleague, Raven, and a talking, three-foot salamander, Newt, in a race against time. The crystal's journey through radiant spatial-temporal warps culminates in an effects-laden finale involving lasers, and other special lighting effects.

What separates Chorvinsky from earlier entrepreneurs is the sheer scope of his dream. While most beginners are content to put together a film showcasing their abilities, Chorvinsky put together a fully-equipped studio facility in his hometown of Kensington, Maryland, to serve as a production base for future projects. The studio and its equipment, said to be financed by family money, is impressive indeed.

"I'm trying to set up a facility that I continued on page 58



## BOXOFFICE SURVEY: GENRE PACES PREVIOUS YEARS, FANTASY IS KING

An analysis of the 50 Top Grossing films, as reported weekly by *Variety*, reveals that in the first half of 1984 (26 weeks through 6/27) revenue from horror, fantasy and science fiction films accounted for 36.9% of all boxoffice revenue, down one percentage point from levels of the previous two years.

Of the 245 films that comprised the weekly listings, 70 or 28.5% were genre titles. This year the fantasy genre is king. There were 22 fantasy films (compared to 18 last year), accounting for 9.0% of all films, but a sensational 25.0% of the boxoffice take; 16 science fiction films (28 last year), 6.5% of all films accounting for 5.8% of boxoffice; and 32 horror films (27 last year), 13.1% of all films but only 6.1% of boxoffice.

The performance of summer films in the second quarter made up for the lack of big genre film releases at the beginning of the year. First quarter genre revenues were 16.5% less than in 1983, the third yearly decrease for the quarter, indicating the trend of distributors to hold potential genre blockbusters until the summer.

Top-grossing genre films in the *Variety* totals are listed at right (through 9/5). For purposes of breakdown by genre, titles are indicated as horror (h), fantasy (f), and science fiction (sf), followed by the number of weeks each title made it into the Top 50 listings since January. The dollar amounts listed represent only a small, scientific sample of a film's total earnings (on an

average of about one fourth of a film's domestic gross).

Genre film revenues this year are more evenly distributed among the three leaders, *GHOSTBUSTERS*, *INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM*, and *GREMLINS* (all fantasy films), also the three highest grossing films of the year as well as top genre hits. Last year, *RETURN OF THE JEDI* alone dominated genre earnings to the degree that it retarded the business of other top films.

With science fiction blockbusters *DUNE*, 2010: *ODYSSEY II*, and John Carpenter's *STARMAN* due to debut this Christmas, genre revenues for the year are expected to climb to the 40% levels seen in both 1981 and 1982.

### TOP GENRE FILMS OF '84

<i>GHOSTBUSTERS</i> (f, 12)	\$55,763,893
<i>INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM</i> (f, 14)	\$50,357,609
<i>GREMLINS</i> (f, 12)	\$41,559,645
<i>STAR TREK III: THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK</i> (sf, 12)	\$20,104,489
<i>SPLASH</i> (f, 16)	\$19,464,774
<i>GREYSTOKE—LEGEND OF TARZAN</i> (f, 14)	\$12,751,939
<i>FRIDAY THE 13TH: THE FINAL CHAPTER</i> (h, 8)	\$8,624,049
<i>THE MUPPETS TAKE MANHATTAN</i> (f, 7)	\$7,292,829
<i>CONAN THE DESTROYER</i> (f, 7)	\$6,873,696
<i>RED DAWN</i> (f, 3)	\$6,464,081
<i>THE LAST STARFIGHTER</i> (sf, 7)	\$5,799,387
<i>THE NEVERENDING STORY</i> (f, 6)	\$5,493,653
<i>TOP SECRET</i> (f, 9)	\$5,453,709
<i>THE JUNGLE BOOK</i> (re-rel, f, 5)	\$3,695,171

# RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD

Screenwriter Dan O'Bannon steers clear of George Romero country and debuts as director.

By Dennis Fischer

The title RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD suggests a sequel, and indeed, the project started out as a sequel to the cult classic NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD, written by John A. Russo, author of the original (see "War of the Living Dead," 13:5:12). Russo's script was abandoned, and so apparently was the idea of a sequel, when writer Dan O'Bannon was brought in to work on the script, and then given the assignment to direct it. The film opens November 9th, from Orion Pictures.

According to producer Tom Fox, who bought the property from Russo, the original script was designed for a low budget, and Orion wanted it expanded. Tobe Hooper had been lined-up to direct, in 3-D, but ankleed the project when financing was delayed. Hooper went on to direct O'Bannon's script of SPACE VAMPIRES for Cannon Films, now called LIFEFORCE, and O'Bannon was tagged to make his feature film directing debut.

While at USC, O'Bannon directed a few student shorts and was heavily involved (writing, acting, editing, doing the special effects, and constructing the sets) on DARK STAR. He went on to write the original scripts for ALIEN (1979), DEAD AND BURIED (1981), a Living Dead inspired zombie picture, and BLUE THUNDER (1983). O'Bannon has often voiced displeasure with the way his scripts were filmed, but is reportedly pleased with what he has been able to accomplish with his own material on RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD's \$3 million budget.

Despite its title, producer Tom Fox is careful not to connect the film to the work of director George Romero, who plans to shoot the third and concluding installment of his Dead trilogy, DAY OF THE DEAD, later this year. "Romero complained that we were trading on his name unfairly," said Fox. "The MPAA looked at the

case and decided that we clearly did, in fact own the title; however, they admonished us, and told us to make certain in our advertising we did not suggest that George Romero was associated with the film."

After Romero lodged his protest against the film in 1982 he was sent a copy of O'Bannon's screenplay and things quieted down. Early in the film, O'Bannon departs from the ground rules established in the Romero films: a zombie is decapitated with a pick-axe but keeps on coming.

The film's premise is that back in 1966 chemicals were spilled into a veterans' cemetery and reanimated several bodies. The Army got everything under control and the bodies were accidentally shipped to Uneda Medical Supply's warehouse where another leak threatens to bring back brain-devouring corpses and other terrors. Frank (James Karen) calls his boss, Burt (Clu Gulager) who insists that they cover up the new accident with the help of their stockroom clerk Freddy (Thom Matthews). Meanwhile, Freddy's seven punk friends are in the local cemetery waiting for him to get off work.

Bill Stout (CONAN THE DESTROYER) was selected to be the film's production designer, creating the look of the settings, the characters, and the corpses. Said Stout, "RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD is a Dan O'Bannon story, so the audience can expect a lot of surprises, the same sort of surprises they got in ALIEN. Dan has taken a very realistic approach to a very bizarre situation."

According to Stout, O'Bannon's trademark as writer and director is to pack his work with interesting detail. "We've filled the sets with all kinds of things so that you really can't take it all in on the first viewing. You'll be able to go back and see things you missed. That's very difficult to manage on this budget, and the credit goes to my art director Robert Howland, and my assistant art director, Clay

Hartley; both worked very hard and were absolutely brilliant in what they were able to accomplish."

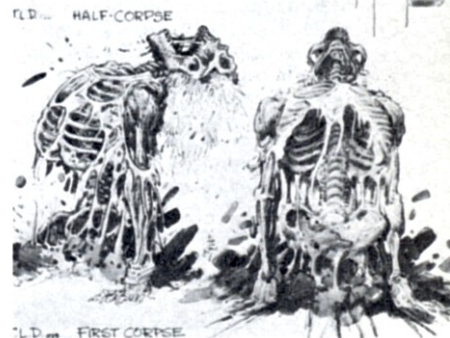
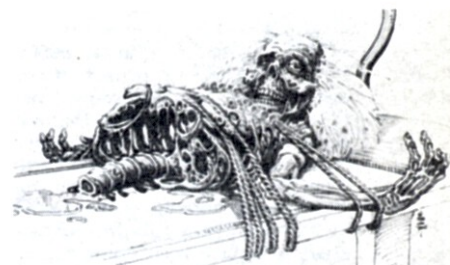
One detail that both Stout and O'Bannon were quite insistent on was that the corpses' features be a departure from those in the Romero films. They wanted a new look that would avoid the 'open wound' make-ups used by Romero. Explained Stout, "We've got a few E.C. corpses just as a sort of homage to E.C. comics; it's what the fans expect, but the rest of our corpses are very different from what anyone's seen on the screen. I approached it partly from an historical viewpoint. I used as a point of reference the mummies of Guanajuato, Mexico. Also, I wasn't interested so much in how they died as when they died, the effects that age would have on the body. The film takes place in Louisville, so we've got a whole southern cemetery which takes us back to the Civil War. We've got corpses in Civil War uniforms and southern belles and dough boys, and babies, and children going all the way up through history."

There are also some spectacular special effects zombies. One is called "half corpse" which is, obviously, a corpse which has been chopped in half with both halves continuing to live. The corpse was constructed by Tony Gardner who handled the mechanical film effects. The top secret monster of the project is called the "Tar-Man," a corpse whose skin has turned into an oozing tar that drips from its skeletal body.

Originally, Bill Munns (SWAMP THING, SAVAGE HARVEST) was hired to do all the make-up effects on the picture including 40-odd zombies and Tar-Man. However, halfway through the production he felt unable to finish the job and a replacement was called in quickly. The replacement was Ken Meyers who borrowed assistants from most of the major make-up houses to get the job finished on time. Much of Munns' work was redone, but the final film will contain work created by both Munns and Meyers.

The actors seem genuinely pleased with their work so far. Said James Karen, a familiar face from both CHINA SYNDROME and POLTERGEIST (he played the real estate developer), "Usually I have trouble being directed by a writer because they tend to be too close to their material. But this is one of the best times I've ever had. I think Dan has an innate ability for direction. I think we're going to know about Dan as a director more than a writer."

Clu Gulager, actor and acting teacher, echoes Karen's sentiments. "I think Dan is doing a fine job. There is a great deal of really slick, ingenious horror, and it's all done in fun. I really feel this particular horror film has a great deal of comedic value, and that the values that Dan O'Ban-



Production designer Bill Stout's "living dead" concepts inspired by EC comics.

Punk rockers barricade themselves inside a medical supply warehouse.



non is going to have as much to do with the comedic concept as with the horrific concept."

While RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD promises to be a very violent film, O'Bannon plans to rely on suggestion rather than gore. According to Tom Fox, "We've got some of the best reanimated dead people you've ever seen onscreen in my opinion. Additionally, there is a huge amount of humor in it. We're not trying to make a 'blood and guts on the floor and step over the puddle of body parts' movie. We want to titillate all of your senses." □

# V: AFTER THE FINAL BATTLE

The Visitors return in regular weekly episodes on NBC in October.

By Alan Karp

In case you haven't heard, V: THE FINAL BATTLE was only the beginning. Starting October 26, the enormously successful miniseries from Warner Brothers Television will be returning to NBC as a weekly series.

How will the first hour-long episode of V begin? According to Robert Singer, who along with Daniel Blatt serves as executive producer of the series, "We start out the first episode just where the miniseries left off." For those of you who've forgotten, V: THE FINAL BATTLE ended on an upbeat note, as the resistance fighters saved the Earth from destruction at the hands of the alien Visitors. Before the closing credits, though, the evil

Diana (Jane Badler) managed to slip off in her own spacecraft. It was this Darth Vader-like disappearing act, of course, that made many of us realize that there would be more of "V".

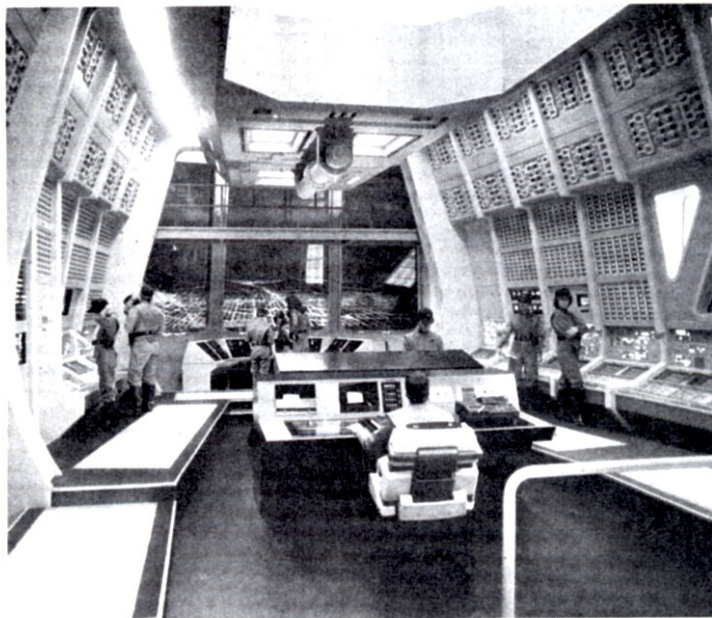


Robert Singer

"In the first five minutes of our first show," says Singer, "Donovan hops into the spacecraft, captures Diana and brings her back to Earth. Then we cut to 'One Year Later' and the trial of Diana. But before that, we get to see what all our regular characters have been doing for the past year."

In addition to Marc Singer, who plays Mike Donovan, the TV cameraman who spearheaded the resistance fighters' counter-attack on the aliens, other series regulars include: Julie Parrish (Faye Grant), the leader of the resistance group; Robin (Blair Tefkin), the young woman who was impregnated by an alien, and Willie

The continuing characters: Jane Badler as the alien commander, Marc Singer and Faye Grant as resistance fighters.



The aliens continue to wage war on Earth from the helm of a new mothership.

(Robert Englund), the likable Visitor who sides with the resistance. A new cast member is Jennifer Cooke who portrays Elizabeth, Robin's half-alien, half-human daughter with mystical powers.

Bob Singer adds that "we've also introduced some important new characters like Nathan Bates, a powerful but unscrupulous industrialist who thinks that Diana's knowledge makes her life worth saving. At any rate, Diana escapes before her trial, and in the process, discovers that there are certain places on Earth where the 'red dust' doesn't work. Eventually, Diana's reunited with her fleet and plans a new attack on Earth. And that's basically the way the show kicks off."

Besides Nathan Bates (Lane Smith), an equally important new character is Lydia (June Chadwick), the alien commander of the ship to which Diana escapes. In upcoming episodes, the power struggle between Lydia and Diana will serve as one of the series' major subplots.

In terms of themes, Singer notes that, "We've broadened the allegory from the French Resistance into more of a total WWII situation in which we have zones where humans are safe, zones that are controlled by the aliens, and we even set up a 'free city'—like Lisbon or Casablanca—so that our people are not necessarily always in hiding. In this way, we'll also get into a lot of human stories as well as special effects."

When asked what some of these new effects will include, Singer says, "We've invented an alien-type watchdog called a *crivit*, which lives underneath the sand. If anyone comes near its area you'll see a bubble rise and the hump-back of this thing

will appear so that it will be able to just reach out and grab whatever's activated the sand and take it down underneath the surface. In the second episode, we've also introduced the ultimate alien warship called *The Scorchier*, which can level an entire city without creating any fall-out."

Singer also made it clear that one of the main aims of his production team was to try and make the aliens adapt to our own technology and then have them refine it in various ways. For example, the Visitors will drive around in human-made vehicles with special touches, like a jeep with a small ray gun mounted on the back.

Although he was somewhat reluctant to cite specific figures, Singer says that "We're probably the most expensive hour on television—somewhere in the million dollar range." As Singer puts it, "costs can really run away from you because of all the special effects we're using, but we're certainly not going to cheat our audience in any way."

Despite the fact that Kenneth Johnson, who created "V" left the miniseries after its first four hours, Singer and his partner, Dan Blatt, come to the series with an impressive list of credentials. Singer himself is a former vice president of dramatic development at NBC, and together with Blatt has produced such features as *THE HOWLING*, *CUJO*, and *INDEPENDENCE DAY*.

Ending our interview on a positive note, Singer said that he and Blatt envision an unlimited number of possible stories for the series "which will be a lot of fun to do and won't repeat each other. Plus, we really enjoy doing it and if you can get that out of an episodic TV show, you're way ahead of the game." □

## SHORT TAKES

**PHIBES RESURRECTED**, a sequel to two Vincent Price vehicles directed by Robert Fuest in the early '70s, is under development at Laurel Entertainment, written by series creators James Whiton and William Goldstein. The idea of another Phibes sequel had been considered at New World Pictures in the mid-'70s, titled **PHIBES RESURRECTUS**. The 73-year-old Price is still active in filmmaking. At a recent press conference for his Cannon horror film **HOUSE OF LONG SHADOWS**, when asked whether he would consider doing more films in the genre, he quipped, "Yes, but they'd better hurry!"

Director **Ridley Scott** has been signed to a non-exclusive, multiple picture, producer-director contract at Columbia Pictures, and will set up headquarters at the Burbank Studios... Scott's big budget fantasy for Universal, **LEGEND**, features make-up effects by Rob Bottin. Tim Curry of **THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW** stars as an 8-foot demon. Bottin, who is earning a cool million for his work on the film, with \$7 million budgeted for effects, got a slap on the wrist for trying untested makeup on Curry. The makeup reportedly ate away part of the actor's face and he had to be rushed to a hospital to recover. Filming has switched to London's EMI studios from Pinewood as a result of the blaze that razed the former 007 stage. The temporary structure is being rebuilt as a permanent stage for filming of **A VIEW TO KILL**, the next James Bond film starring Tanya Roberts and Roger Moore (his last).

Lucasfilm may not get Steven Spielberg for the next **STAR WARS** film. Spielberg is preparing **PETER PAN** to shoot at London's EMI studios in March. Michael Jackson, rumored to star, is out and the search is on for a 10-year-old male lead... Spielberg is producing **THE GOONIES** for release by Warner Bros next June. Another makeup effects extravaganza, to be directed by Richard Donner, the film does not feature the kind of puppet effects on view in **GREMLINS**... Spielberg is producing **WEIRD SCIENCE** at Universal, to be directed by John Hughes (**SWEET SIXTEEN**). Spielberg's set-up at Universal includes an adobe home built on the lot to the tune of \$3.1 million. The house duplicates one Spielberg was fond of in Mexico and includes a jacuzzi, sauna, and racquet ball courts.



Mechanical effects supervisor Isidoro Raponi poses at the feet of the film's star, a baby brontosaurus, 70 feet long and 25 feet high, constructed full scale.

# BABY

## A shaggy dinosaur story from Walt Disney Productions.

by Michael Mayo

Do people want to see another dinosaur movie? Disney Studios sure hopes so. The new "mature" Disney film production arm, Touchstone Films, hopes to repeat the initial genre success of *SPLASH* with its second modern fantasy film within a year, the \$13 million production of *BABY*. Although it features a cute dinosaur, the filmmakers stress that they are trying to *not* make this a "cute" film; one honor no one at Disney ever wants to claim is to be the successor to 1979's infamous turkey, *THE BLACK HOLE*.

The story is actually the first sale of writing couple Clifford and Ellen Green, and concerns a quarrelling young couple played by William Katt and Sean Young (she's a paleontologist, he's a sports writer) who discover a living family of Brontosaurus deep in the African jungle. After them is nasty Patrick McGoohan who wants the discovery credit for himself and intends to make sure that there's nobody around who can contradict him. Lest the audience not get the point, scenes in the early part of the film show McGoohan cold-bloodedly murdering an informant. Other scenes of violence which led Disney to label *BABY* a Touchstone Film include an extended and graphic climactic attack upon a native village by one of the adult dinosaurs similar to scenes which got 1933's *KING KONG* in trouble with the censors.

As with *SPLASH*, many of the people working on *BABY* are not talents normally associated

with the Disney Studios. Interestingly enough, several of the key creative people are either past or active personnel of Industrial Light & Magic, which seems to be part of a low-key but continuing Lucasfilm relationship with Disney.

Producing the film is 36 year-old Jonathan Taplin, a man with some of the strangest credentials in filmmaking. Taplin began his career staging rock concerts. He was a college student at Princeton who met rock guru Albert Goldman and learned enough to become Bob Dylan's road manager at age 18. With rock's general decline in the 70's, Taplin started casting about for a new way to make money and decided that the logistics of producing a film couldn't be that different from producing a rock tour. He met a young film editor named Martin Scorsese who wanted to direct a film he'd written called *MEAN STREETS*, and Taplin's new career as a film producer was born. Since then, Taplin has produced *CARNY*, *THE LAST WALTZ*, and may see his latest release *UNDER FIRE*, pick up some academy awards next year.

Another man whose films have definitely not been cute is *BABY*'s director, B.W.L. Norton, responsible for the downbeat druggie film *CISCO PIKE* and *MORE AMERICAN GRAFFITI*. Norton was recommended to Taplin by Lucasfilm's Howard Kazanjian. Although *MORE AMERICAN GRAFFITI* failed commercially, Kazanjian told Taplin that Lucasfilm felt Norton had done a helluva job with difficult material. George Lucas put in a good

continued on page 50

Actress Sean Young plays a zoology post graduate who nets a live dinosaur while on safari in Africa.



Striking visual effects for THE LAST STARFIGHTER represent a coming-of-age for the field of computer animation. In the biggest breakthrough yet for the technique, Digital Productions, founded by John Whitney Jr. and Gary Demos, has produced some seamless visual effects for the film that approximate photo realism. Images of such subtlety and clarity that the only way to tell they are special effects is the sure knowledge that they can't be anything else.

While TRON's computer animation received a far bigger trumpeting, the effects of THE LAST STARFIGHTER are a far more significant achievement. Gone are the candy-apple bright colors and the simplified, unreal look of most computer images. THE LAST STARFIGHTER's effects can hold their own against the highest quality state-of-the-art motion control photography without using miniatures or models.

The new technique embodies many advantages and disadvantages. Because the technology is new, its full potential has yet to be explored. For THE LAST STARFIGHTER, Digital Productions took drawings created by artists and draftsmen and gave them three-dimensional shape in the "mind" of a computer. Objects are given movement, weight, color, lighting, and substance. With sufficient lead time any image an artist conceives can be recreated and manipulated by the computer in a way that is almost indistinguishable from the image that would be achieved by actually building, manipulating, and photographing the design.

The goal of Digital Productions was to create a perfectly realistic computer image. Once this level of image complexity was achieved, then any image, no matter how fantastic, could be made to look genuine. Digital is the first and so far only computer simulation effects house to have a super-computer dedicated to creating computer graphics. Having been in business since June of 1981, the company leads the field because it has both the machinery and the required software needed to achieve this high-level of image manufacturing.

*Article by Dennis K. Fischer*



# THE LAST

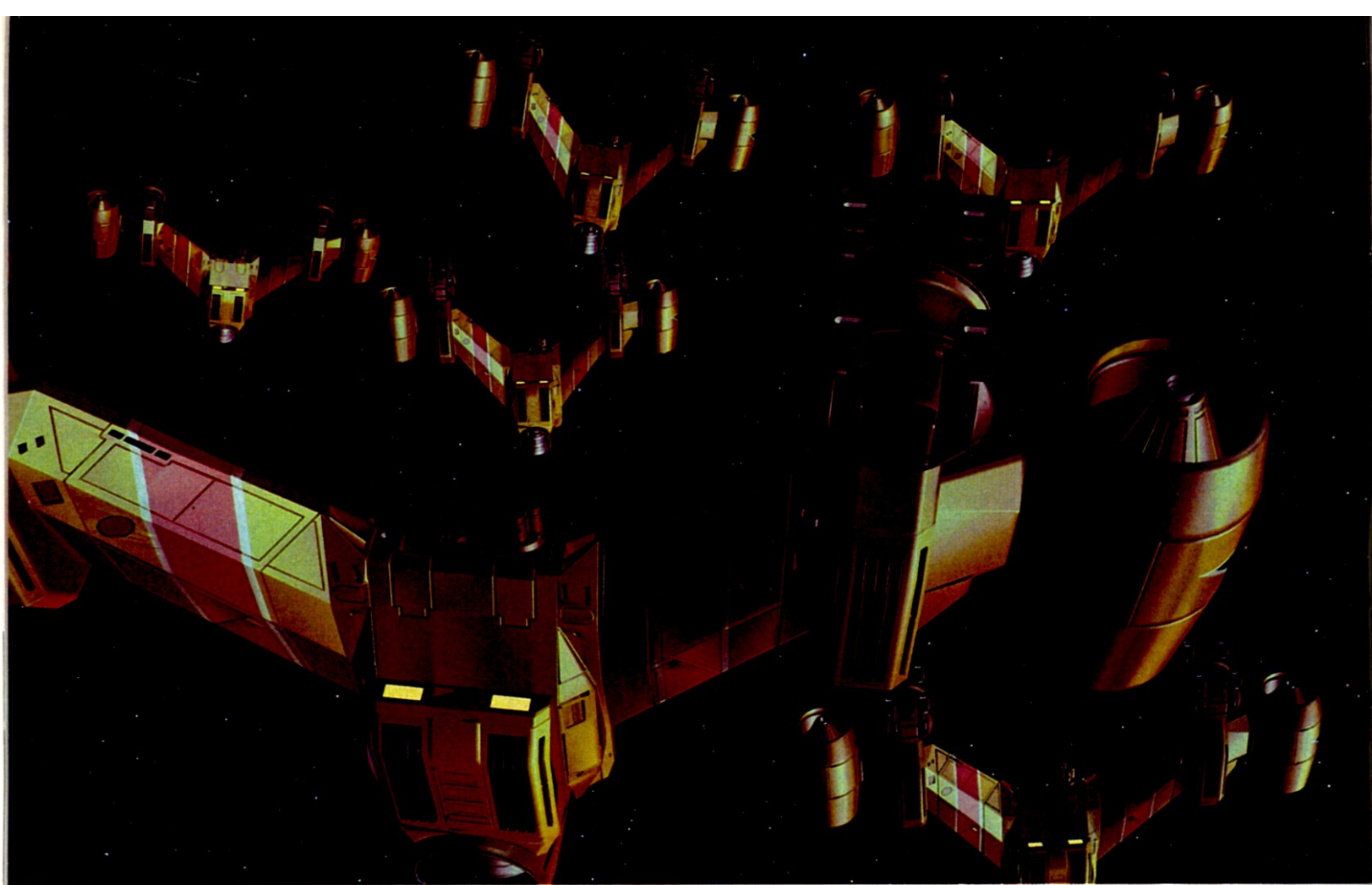


*Digital Productions makes  
the dream of computer  
animated effects a reality.*



**COMPUTER IMAGERY** as seen in **THE LAST STARFIGHTER** firmly establishes the technique as a viable alternative to conventional special effects cinematography. Shown is the Gunstar entering the atmosphere of Rylos. The scene, right down to the pilot and navigator in the cockpit, is entirely computer generated. The aesthetics are a matter of taste. Fans would say it looks more real than real. Detractors point to the same surreal quality as a defect of the technique.

# STARFIGHTER



The company dedicated itself to effects work on *THE LAST STAR-FIGHTER* from January of 1982 to April of 1984. There were about three months of pre-production work, and the effects themselves were created over a 15-16 month period. Computer simulation proved to be ideal for creating images of spaceship battles and the process held many advantages. For one thing, gravity has no effect on how a spaceship can be manipulated unlike the use of miniatures where it is a necessary concern. For

another, once having created the shape and configuration for one vessel, that ship can easily be duplicated numerous times in the computer with a few simple instructions. The computer can make all adjustments in size, perspective, angle, location, etc., that are involved in scenes requiring a squadron of spaceships to maneuver and attack.

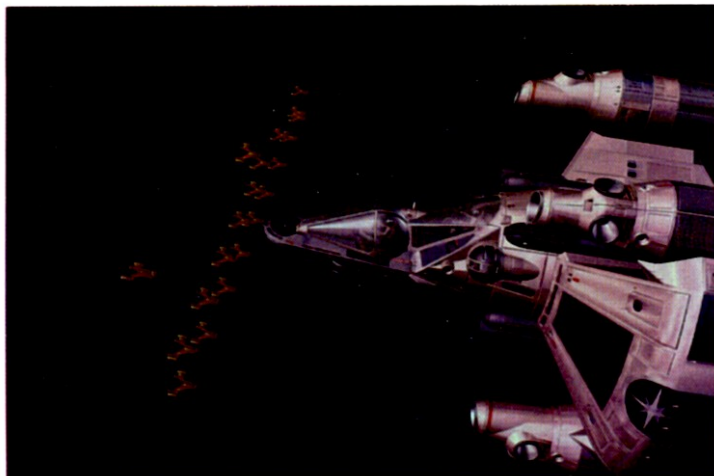
In addition to creating spaceships, computer simulation also provides advantages in realizing exciting backgrounds for the

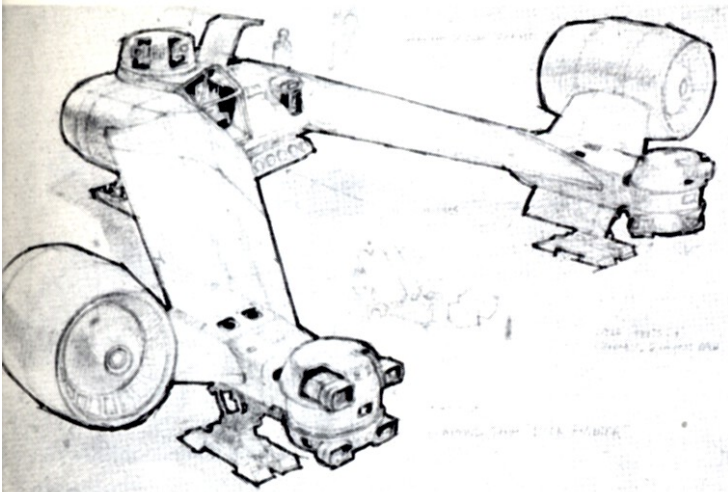
action. The picture takes place in two key locations—earth and outer space; the space sequences are entirely produced by computer simulation. The process allows for vast starscapes with richly detailed, revolving planets of amazing colors, and spaceships that can move along and rotate on three different axes, all without resorting to mattes or optical printers.

From the very beginning, Digital wanted the production design of the film to showcase the possibilities of computer simulation in a

creative way. For their production designer they selected the highly talented Ron Cobb who has designed such films as *ALIEN*, and *CONAN THE BARBARIAN*. The Gunstar ship seen in the film is an example of how Cobb designed for computer animation. The ship is conceived with none of the constraints that set construction or gravity would impose. The gimbal system of gun turrets featured on the ship could not have been built in miniature and been made to work, according to Whitney. In

**Left:** The Gunstar prepares to engage deckfighters from the Ko-Dan armada. Though human figures are currently beyond the scope of digital scene simulation, the rough approximations visible here inside the Gunstar were capable of head, arm and body movement. **Right:** The Gunstar's death blossom weaponry destroys the Ko-Dan deckfighters. The explosion was filmed live-action, then computer-scanned and digitized frame by frame to be composited electronically with the scene simulation.





**KO-DAN DECKFIGHTERS** seen from the perspective of the Gunstar, flying undetected beneath the armada. Once the database of a ship has been defined in the computer, it can be replicated endlessly in a scene, in any size and from any angle, with a great deal more ease than in conventional effects cinematography. Above: Production designer Ron Cobb's design sketch of the Ko-Dan ships.

this way, the film was designed to exceed the capabilities of conventional model-making and effects photography.

"When I was working on ALIEN, I was very interested in the emerging imaging technology coming out of computer graphics," Cobb recalled. "I'd been reading a bit about it when we were doing some tentative designs for the Nostromo. I was storyboarding all sorts of computer graphics instrumentation and decided I really wanted to look into companies that do this sort of thing and talk about the possibilities. Someone recommended Triple-I (Information International Incorporated), so Ridley Scott, myself, and a number of other people from the production went over to Triple-I.

"I met John Whitney Jr. for the first time, and he showed us their sample reel when they were first getting started. I was very impressed by the state things had reached then, pre-TRON. They really had some amazing images, and I was very enthusiastic about using them if we possibly could. But then ALIEN switched to England, and we ended up using computer companies in London to do the stuff we needed, so it was never quite finished the way we wanted it to be.

"John always remembered me and my enthusiasm for his work so a few years after I'd finished CONAN, I got a call from him; he was forming Digital Productions and installing a powerful computer. He wondered if I wanted to be involved as art director for the company. I said I would be thrilled." I postponed a number of projects and started in on that in the very early days.

"The aspect that most interested me was the general opportunity to learn how it all worked. I found that essentially, the encoding process—the way in which the compu-

ter could grasp an object by the methods that John was using—involved fairly conventional mechanical drafting with an emphasis on contour and a mapping of the three-dimensional surfaces. I was very much at home doing that."

The computer simulation process basically entails three major steps. The first is that of drafting and encoding. The second is called technical directing which involves refinements and programming the exact movement, speed, and direction of objects within a scene. The

final step of the process is, of course, the final filming. Along the way, certain problems had to be licked such as that of transparency. Certain portions of the required images needed to reflect light or be transparent and reveal inner workings. This is no mean feat when it has to be worked out on the computer, but Digital managed to achieve highly effective results.

Cobb started learning how to design for the computer by doing detailed outlines or wire-frame drawings of three dimensional objects. In these kinds of drawings, there are no hard surfaces or hidden lines. It's as if the object were made of glass and you could see all the outlines of the object's many features.

After mastering this technique, Cobb trained a small staff in using encoders while continuing to learn how to design for them effectively. THE LAST STARFIGHTER was originally to have been a Lorimar film, and Lorimar required that a design be presented to them for the Starfighter, the main spaceship in the film which was later renamed the Gunstar.

"In the early stages, we were kind of handicapped in that I had to use geometric primitives to a certain extent," said Cobb. "We don't necessarily have to nest geometric primitives one along side another using this process, a polygonal mesh process where we contour map and create wire-cages. We can do continuous and complex surfaces. To help the encoders, how-

**"The technology interferes very little," said art director Ron Cobb. "Instead, it's extremely helpful. It's very exciting, and an extremely creative form of animation. You have a tremendous sense of control."**

ever, I built the ship out of a series of cones and cylinders all intersecting so that mathematically it would be relatively easy to put together so we could do a dry run on the ship."

"I settled on a final design for its initial run-through, making very careful drawings, and then working with encoders we blew up each part finding all the reference points and the number of degrees around each circle and the levels of complexity, keeping the polygon configuration, the bounded flat planes, and the facets as low as possible in number.

"Slowly, over a long period of

## DIGITAL SCENE SIMULATION<sup>SM</sup>

*How Pixels combine to form an image—a primer for the uninitiated.*

Computer animation is created by combining millions of pixels. Pixels (which derives from the phrase "picture element") are the smallest bits of information on the screen of a computer generated image. Basically it can be imagined as one dot with a shade and hue that is combined with other dots to create the final image. Each pixel is too tiny to see with the naked eye, but when all the pixels are combined they create an image which is on the screen for 1/40th of a second.

The raster is the complete field of pixels that define the final image. THE LAST STARFIGHTER had its effects filmed in CinemaScope, which has a 2.35 aspect ratio, involving a raster of 4000 x 6000 pixels (or 24 million elements). That many elements allows for very fine and precise resolution. Additionally, each pixel has a bit of color, brightness, and hue to it.

There is a range of 4,096 intensity levels for each of the primary colors (red, blue, and green) giving the computer 4,096<sup>3</sup> as the total possible number of shades for each pixel. The reason for this level of precision is that it makes the resulting shading in the image more lifelike, subtle,



An IMI previewing system at Digital Productions calls up raster displays of simulated scenes on CRT monitors used for motion testing.

and natural. Thus the algorithms used can compute the shading for a pixel with consummate precision.

The human eye cannot distinguish a difference of one increment on a scale of 1 to 64 intensity levels. Some might argue that 64 intensity levels would therefore be sufficient, but images generated using such a system tend to have banding and easily give away their origins in simulation. The greater the precision with which the increments of color density can be calculated, the better the fidelity.

To understand just how complex the calculations are to create an image, remember that the computer is defining a scene of 4000 x 6000 pixels times 3 color components times the resolution and density; that only gives you the number of computations that have to be performed per frame (approximately, 7.2 billion computations). In order to provide such essential image features as shadows, transparency, multiple light sources, perspective, and detail, in any kind of reasonable time frame, a super-computer is required. Digital Productions uses the Cray XMP, the most powerful computer available.

**“We knew we would have to build a mockup of the Starcar,” said art director Ron Cobb. “We went directly from that to the simulated car, practically in a single shot, and that’s asking for comparisons.”**

time as the computer was running up to speed and the programs were refined, we were able to start building the first starfighter. We did wire-cage versions of it and finally raster scan shadings (the final stage of the drafting process) and color versions of it. I was beginning to learn each phase as we went through it: how to break down an object in order to give each part different colors, how to color it, and how to devise points of origin for objects which had to rotate. We had to design everything very carefully so that the turrets would rotate in the proper attitude, and so on.

“Slowly, the first version of the ship emerged with some modifications. We shot a few tests of it to show Lorimar. It still had bugs, and it really was a long process—many, many months. It took forever for everyone to become aware of the technical directing and the encoders so that the many bugs could be isolated and chased out of the computer.”

Ron Cobb was a trifle disappointed that he could not do a more sophisticated design for the Gunstar, but because of the time involved in preparing the first test and the deadline for completion of the film’s effects, it was decided that the initial design would be used. Thus, the Gunstar remained a ship built around a lot of cones and cylinders and strange shapes. However, as details were added, the goal of photo-realism became more obtainable. The Gunstar remains the most complex and fully realized object in the film.

The three dimensional aspects of an object must be translated into the computer’s language. Once the computer has “conceived” an object it is capable of displaying it as viewed from any angle or whatever position the operator wishes. The image is initially defined in wire-cage form and can be displayed on a vector screen. The computer affords the designer tremendous accuracy and realism in posi-

tioning the ship with a good understanding of what it is going to look like from basically any viewer orientation—head-on, receding, high angle, low angle, or from either side. These images can then be stored and played back. The initial animation or movement is done at this technical directing stage. Science fiction artist Rick Sternbach worked closely with Cobb (without credit) in storyboarding most of the action in the simulated scenes to aid in the directing.

Explains Cobb, “Various key positions for the ship in an animated sequence are determined as reference points for the computer. The computer can then calculate all the inbetween positions and play them back in sequence as animation. The interesting part is that we’re able to modify the initial key frames we’ve selected. I can push them forward or back, I can add the effect of a curve so that the animation is not particularly linear, I can also accelerate or decelerate in and out of these positions, all automatically computed and played back.

“You end up with a tremendous amount of very accurate control of the movement of the ship or the movement of any object you care to display on the vector screen. It’s very exciting and an extremely creative form of animation. You have tremendous control in a scene. The technology intervenes or interferes very little. Instead it’s extremely helpful. There’s no end of subtlety; you can add to the action because you have full control over the movement of the object. You can make it sing; you can make it act. It’s really interesting.”

Adjustments of the movement of any object can be made very easily. Thus, if director Nick Castle didn’t like the movement of a particular ship in a particular scene, he simply lists the changes to be made and in a relatively short time he is viewing the revised version. There is no need to complete the shot and have it developed before it can be viewed. This allows for extensive previewing of the action scenes and allows them to be honed to the director’s concept of perfection.

The previewing system uses a slightly abbreviated wire-frame version of each ship to provide a rough idea of each ship’s orientation. The technical directors decide upon the final key frames, then instruct the computer to generate all the inbetween frames, and the scene is played back in fractions of a minute as an effective silhouette.

Only the outline of the object is displayed, the details have been removed to enhance the speed of computation. When it is played back, it’s in real time. Considering that some of the objects moved are of a very complex nature incorporating up to three-quarters of a million polygons with an extraordinary number of facets to define each surface, the speed of the computer becomes truly amazing.

When color, lighting, and shadow effects are added the computer takes up two and a half minutes per frame. (When Digital first started working with their computer, the most powerful available, it took up to 40 minutes per frame to generate a fully colored scene: Digital has been able to speed up the process further by modifying and refining their programming over the course of working on THE LAST STARFIGHTER.)

To adjust color and lighting effects, a raster scan must be checked. A raster display scans from right to left in a three dot color matrix across a video screen, like the picture on your TV set. The raster displays used to provide motion picture film quality are of course much more finely detailed, containing lots more information per screen than a conventional TV picture.

Since it takes up to 2½ minutes to preview each raster frame of fully colored and shaded screen images, a single frame is recorded for each sequence, and the color and lighting are checked and corrected when necessary. Once the lighting position is designated for a particular sequence, it remains static for all frames. A few additional frames are then sampled to make sure that the lighting position has been properly designated.



**ENCODING** the database which defines an object in the eye of the computer is done using a series of detailed drawings. Art director Ron Cobb’s side view of the Gunstar is shown. Like drafting plans that would be drawn-up if the object were to be constructed, the designs define the object from each point of view, and are rendered on graph paper to aid in transferring the drawings into a series of numerical reference points. An encoder (above) uses a digitizing table and a pair of cursors equipped with cross-hairs which interact with a sensor net inside the table to enter reference points into computer memory. As each point is entered, it appears on the encoder’s CRT vector monitor. When connected, the points form the surface polygons of which the simulated image is composed. Made up of nearly 600,000 polygons, the Gunstar took a period of several months to encode.

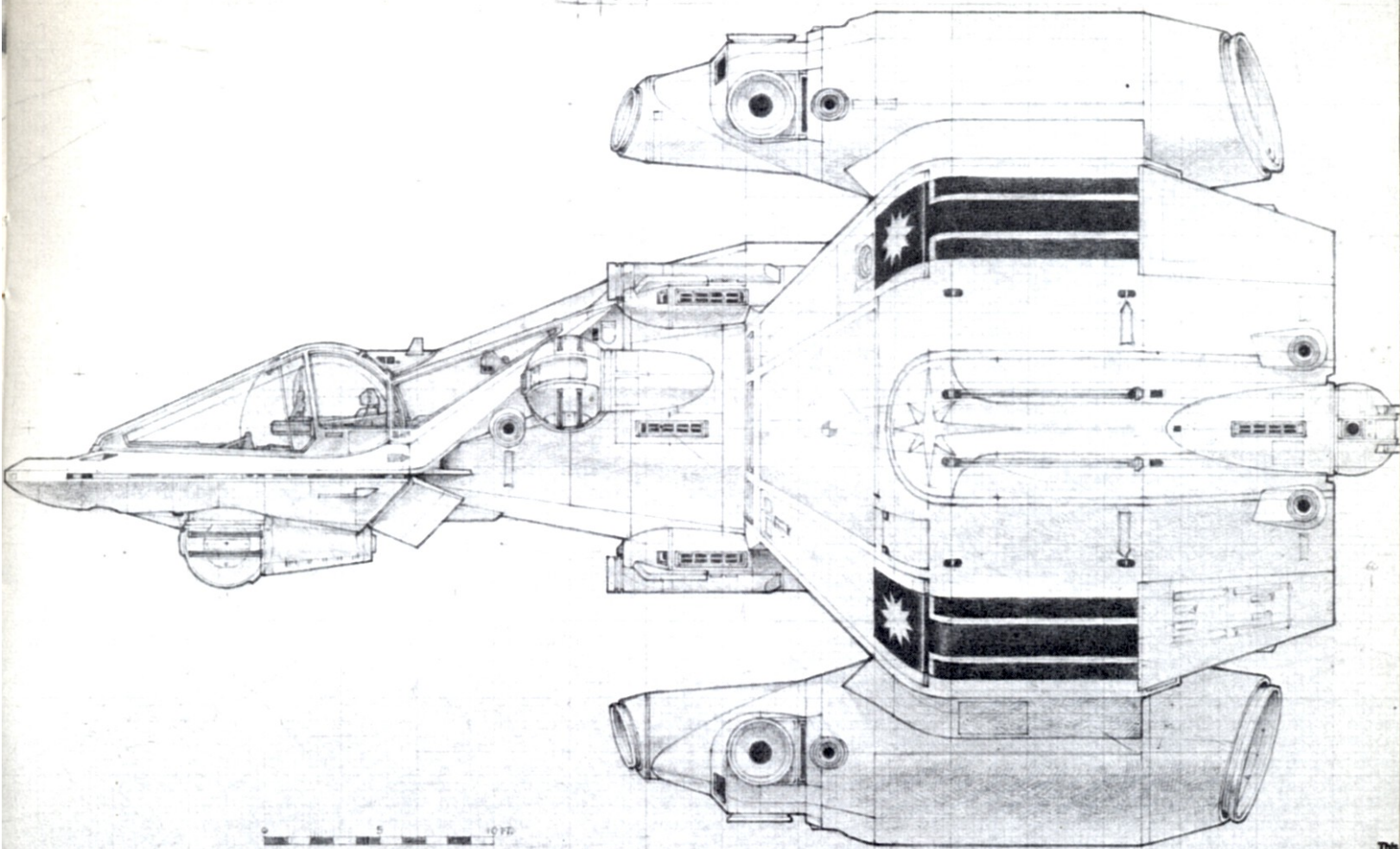
“We look at an individual frame and move the lights around to where we want them,” explains Cobb. “By and large it’s like positioning the sun in the sky and then sampling a few stills in the sequence. If there’s some peculiarity at this stage, we have to go back and correct for it somewhere along the line. We might even have to go back and redo the animation if it is something very strange that has been unforeseen.

“For instance, we can’t always tell exactly what’s in front of what in the vector displays used to preview the animation. Sometimes in our haste, we can miscalculate, and we might not check by looking at the top view or bottom view. We may have a ship actually penetrate the side of a cliff. Suddenly we’ll see a wing slice right through another ship or something like that and realize, ‘Omigod, I’ve got the ship in the wrong position.’

“Another problem is that sometimes when the perspectives are not extreme and the ship is very far in the distance, we can’t really tell which side of the ship we are looking at. We may, for instance, think we’re looking at the front of the ship when we’re really looking at the back of it. And if we don’t find out until we raster scan, we see the ship moving in reverse and say—‘Omigod, we’re going to have to turn that ship around.’ We had a

At Digital Productions, Mario Kamberg supervises the drafting and encoding.





few funny instances like that when we had ships passing through things or flying backwards."

One of the refreshing aspects about the effects for *THE LAST STARFIGHTER* is the use of a realistic and subdued color scheme. "We tend to associate this technology with a lot of garish, candy-apple colors because, essentially, a lot of technicians who developed this technology were often in charge of making the images, and they tended towards a tasteless excess," said Cobb. "While *TRON* has some fairly nice colors occasionally, there often tends to be exaggerated, color-blind, horrible colors and I wasn't sure whether that was an inherent limitation in the system or whether it was just the way the people had been doing it. I couldn't get over how one can achieve subtle colors—the ochres, the pearls, the mauves, and other variations. There are some really amazing and high quality colors that can be used."

"I tried to use earth tones as much as I possibly could in *STARFIGHTER*, sometimes to the amazement of the people in charge who felt that the colors were a bit too subtle at times, that I was perhaps going in the other direction. I used a very ochre, sand color for the Gunstar, and we were vacillating between not having it too yellow or too brown, nor too metallic. It was

fun to be able to walk around in there in tiny decimal points, because the color schemes are quantified in decimal increments."

Everyone working on the film is very concerned with how realistic the effects will appear to the audience. As a test, a final image was projected on the biggest screen at MGM and production members walked right up to the screen to see if anything electronic could be detected. The resolution was such that it passed the test with flying colors. One of the crucial tests for the project was to be the starcar which Robert Preston uses to drive Lance Guest into outer space.

Explains Cobb, "We knew we would have to build a mock-up of the actual car, an operating, three-dimensional mock-up for the scenes on location. We went directly from that to a simulated car, and that's just asking for comparisons. In fact, we practically do it in a single shot, so we wanted to be very, very careful. I obviously had to do the designs so that both had to be identical. I initially designed the car considering the requirement that it had to be built. It was up to Gene Winfield to build the car. I went over and looked at his chassis: he had an extended Volkswagen chassis that could be used as a wheel base and built it up from there, fulfilling the requirements of the script and the way it

was supposed to look and operate."

"Then we took the same drawing over to Kevin Rafferty, the head of our department, and talked it over with him. We looked into shortcuts that would help the encoders yet still make sure that Gene Winfield could build along the same lines. We got them pretty close together. We were actually encoding the plans at one point, that is building the car in the computer, as Winfield was building it out in the Valley, and I was going back and forth comparing notes and making certain that the colors were as close as possible. Actually, I'm very pleased. I think we ended up with virtually the same car, and it looks the same in both simulation and reality. The proportions are exactly the same and the simulated version of the car has additional details such as rear strutters that fold out and engines that are revealed when it takes off and becomes a spaceship."

John Whitney, Jr. is concerned with just how audiences will perceive computer simulated effects. He feels that a computer simulated spaceship can be held on screen longer and still maintain its believability better than miniatures, which typically must be cut away from quickly if they are not to reveal their nature. Believability is also important because the script of *THE LAST STARFIGHTER*

takes the audience through a demonstration of just how the ships are operated, and every detail of that operation must be realistically presented.

Simulation is also used to create a likeness of the film's actors in medium and long shots. "We have close-ups, which are interior shots, where the action begins, and we cut to a medium shot which is an exterior view, and that action continues in computer simulation," said Whitney. "By cutting back and forth between a medium exterior shot in simulation and interior close-ups that are live-action, we are further blending the line where the simulation begins and the live action ends. A goal of this picture from the simulation point-of-view is to blur that distinction so that the audience won't be able to tell which is which. We also have shots where the foreground is live action and the background is simulation."

"There is also a kind of perceptual psychology to this too. You can have a computer simulated element in a scene which will not play as being live, but if you put another element with it that is live, it helps carry the element that's not live. This is very successful in background matte paintings where there is a foreground set construction that has a composite background painting behind it. There is another aspect working in our

**“We only have to simulate as much detail as the film can reproduce,” explained Digital Productions chief John Whitney, Jr. “Luckily, there are a number of very sophisticated techniques to help us do just that.”**

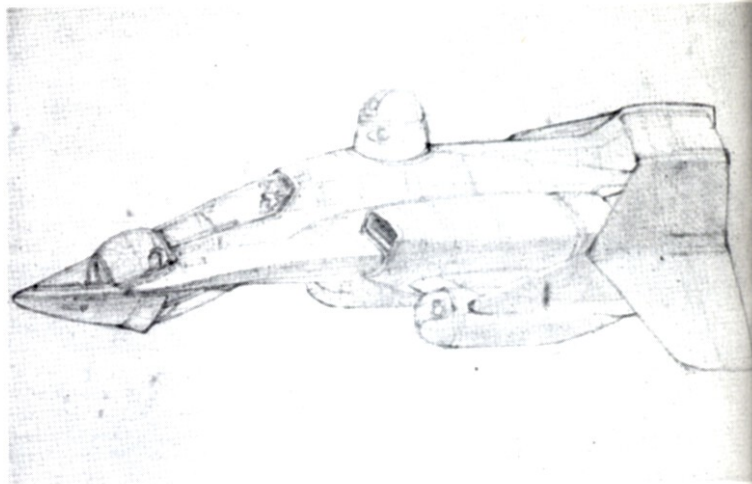
favor which is a saving grace actually, and that is the resolving power or resolution of film. However great it may be, it is only a subset of reality.

“If you film a motion picture of a wall in 65mm and project it with the best lens you can get right next to the wall itself, you can immediately tell the difference. The whole production process is generations away from what you and I experience as everyday reality. The matte painter knows exactly how to take advantage of the motion picture’s reproduction capability, and by the same token we are learning to take advantage of the same

limitations. We only have to simulate as much detail as the film can reproduce, no more. Luckily, there are a number of very sophisticated techniques that are emerging to help us along those lines.”

One of the constraints that Digital worked under in the pursuit of photo-realism in simulation effects, apart from the time limitations, was that of generic expectations. George Lucas’ STAR WARS created a look and concept of space battles that film companies do not wish to deviate from. Such mimicry gives THE LAST STARFIGHTER what Ron Cobb describes as the “spitfires in space approach.” Once more, spaceships do not conform to the physical laws of the universe as they bank on non-existent air, etc. Cobb did insert a little sliding, indicating the effects of inertia when changing direction, but even that had to be downplayed. Since Universal, and Lorimar were paying the bills, what they wanted would have to be what they’d receive. Thus, the effects of THE LAST STARFIGHTER are highly reminiscent of those produced in other space films.

Cobb designed the enemy ships with a swept forward wing Stukka-like look. This Nazi aircraft-look is meant to suggest the evilness of the deck fighters that Alex (Lance Guest) is combating. Cobb describes them as “strange, blocky, bulky, menacing little interceptors with gatling lasers, obvious gun turrets, and strange markings. The



**THE GUNSTAR** maneuvers in outer space, flanked by two pyramid-shaped targeting beacons. Above: Art director Ron Cobb’s early design for the ship, with more of the look of a modern jet-fighter. Since the script called for the Gunstar to maneuver in the atmosphere as well as in outer space, Cobb researched defense hardware as well as the latest NASA designs to come up with the right look.

mothership was designed along the same lines. All these ships were designed to be capable of landing vertically, but we never had a chance to demonstrate that in the picture.

“The deck fighters have swiveling double-engines that pivot to a vertical position and the third engine in the back will also pivot to a vertical position. We thought for a while we would get to demonstrate this on the asteroid when they land, but a lot of that action was cut out.”

In addition to the Gunstar, the

deck fighters, and mothership, Cobb also designed a utility ship, a Rylosian base built into the side of a mountain, and several alien characters. Among Cobb’s most impressive contributions to the film were modifications to a chase sequence through an asteroid tunnel, or rather series of tunnels.

“I wanted to use some interesting lighting effects where the actual light from the engines of the spacecraft in the tunnel would travel with the ship and illuminate the sides of the tunnel,” Cobb remarked.

“It looks like we’re going to be able to pull that off. I’ve seen some preview scenes of it and it looks very interesting. It’s a fundamentally dark tunnel with just the lights of the engines crawling along the tunnel surfaces.”

Nick Castle, director of THE LAST STARFIGHTER, was also allowed a lot of latitude in coordinating the final effects. His co-workers all praise his grasp of the basic effects concepts and his flexibility as well as his high standards. Castle was particularly excited about using the new computer techniques and predicted that motion control photography may become obsolete. Of course, Castle’s main concern for the film had to be how the effects fit into the story, and not surprisingly, that was one of Digital’s concerns as well.

According to John Whitney, “From the dramatic point-of-view, the production process, whether it involves live action cinematography, miniatures, or other special effects, that process is there to help tell a story in a way that is believable, exciting, and entertaining. To take the big picture view of all this, I think with the impact of computers in other fields what tends to happen is that the computer frees people to spend more time on the creative aspects of a problem by eliminating some of the old,

## THE STATE OF THE ART

*Experts look at digital simulation and where the field is headed.*

**By Charlotte Wolter**

Is it real, or is it Memorex? You may find yourself asking that question a lot in the years to come, and not just when Ella Fitzgerald sings.

THE LAST STARFIGHTER uses computer-generated images of spaceships, an asteroid and other space vehicles, all animated through eyeball-rolling, stomach-flipping maneuvers in space. Although the success or failure of its simulated imagery will probably have little impact on the eventual success of this new technology—it is simply too useful to fail in the long run: the work reveals much about the current state of computer graphics. The images are in many cases beautiful, with interesting design and stylistic touches.

But do they look real? Dr. James Blinn of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, considered the leading innovator in the field had this comment: “Digital Productions seems to be tooting their horn about how much their stuff is totally indistinguishable from reality. The pictures they make look good, but, if anyone looks at a photograph of a real thing, a real

asteroid or a real spacecraft, no one is going to be fooled for one minute. The lighting on their spaceships looks funny to me, like an airbrushed painting. Airbrushed paintings look nice, but they don’t look like the real thing.

“People are working on trying to make things realistic. In a specific image it is not always clear what makes it look less than real. There are a lot of commonly cited factors: complexity, texture, lighting, depth quality. Each of these elements is a matter of tuning the number you feed into the existing programs or making the existing programs do more complex things.”

Nevertheless, Blinn maintains, it doesn’t really matter. “Movies don’t and never will portray reality. You wouldn’t want to portray a spaceship as it really is in space, with no fill light, no ambient light. It would look funny.”

Art Durinski, a former employee of Digital Productions who’s now Creative



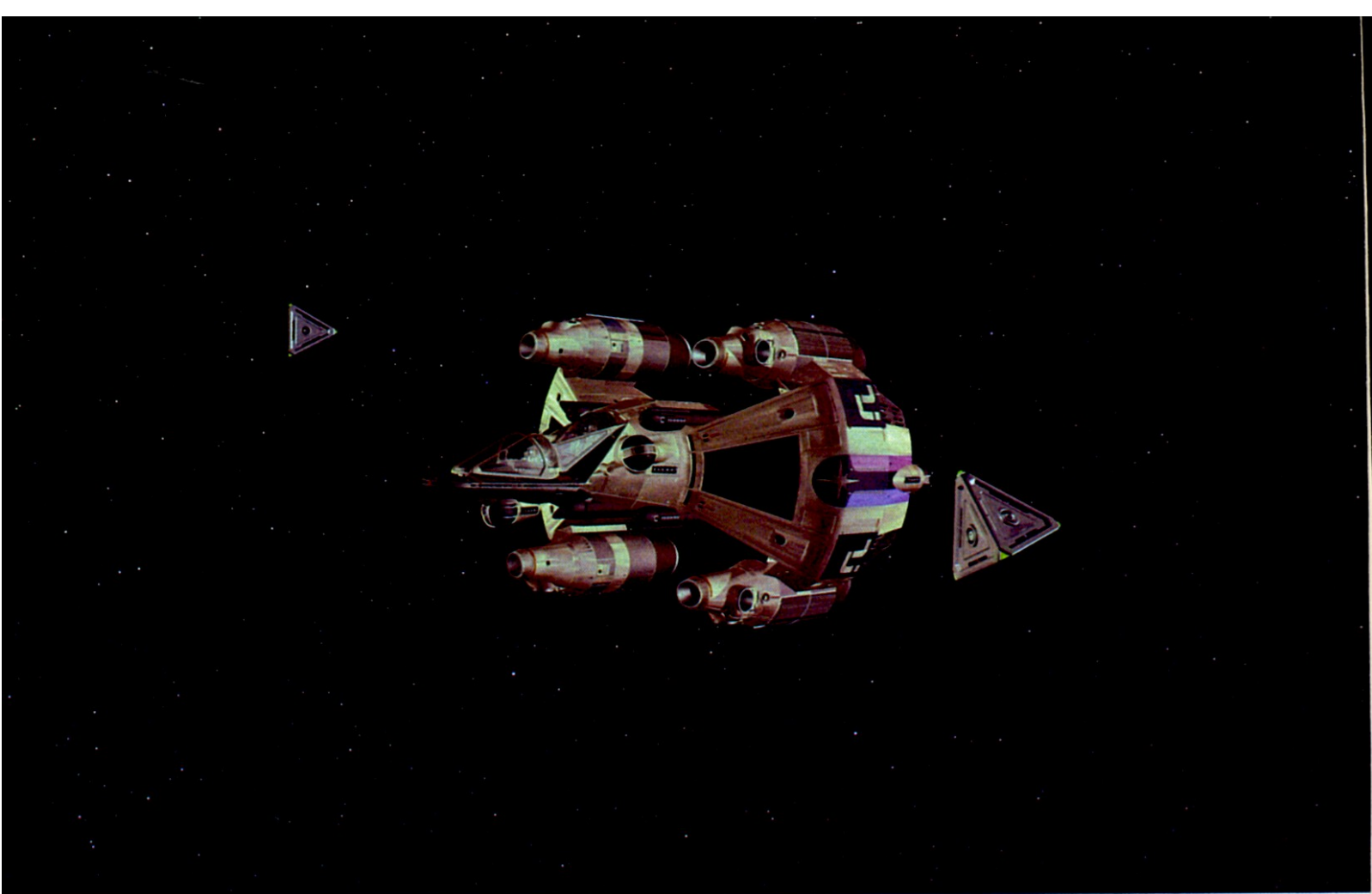
**Dr. James Blinn**

Director for Omnibus Computer Graphics, Inc., a production firm which has just rented studio space on the Paramount lot, agreed that purely realistic images may not be an important goal. “Digital scene simulation does not look real, but it has a quality that is unlike anything else. I don’t think you always want it to be real. If you want reality, you can take a camera, go outside and shoot.”

A veteran of the work done on TRON at Triple-I and a designer for the groundbreaking stereo computer-animated film MAGIC JOURNEYS, at EPCOT, Durinski finds, “The real exciting, creative aspect of computer graphics is to make something that appears to be real, and then totally destroy that reality to serve the storyline or serve a design element. It’s an art and a look all to itself.”

As sophisticated as the equipment and the software at Digital Productions may seem, new methods are making vast improve-

*continued on page 54*



laborious, mechanical encumbrances.

"Also, the computer allows for a new level of precision. For instance, in sound reproduction, you've probably heard the comparisons of the signal to noise ratio. Incredible signal to noise ratios have been characteristic of digital signal processing, and that represents precision, a more faithful kind of reproduction taking place. I think when we talk about the use of computers in generating special effects sequences, we may be talking about a

higher degree of believability on the screen. It puts you there more than other effects methods would.

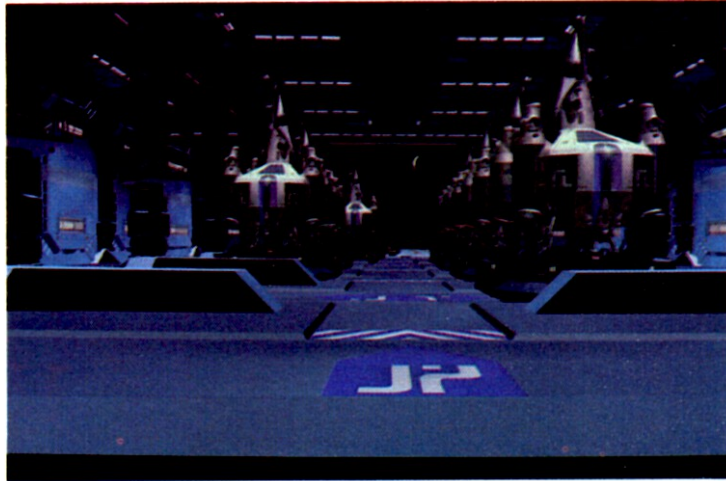
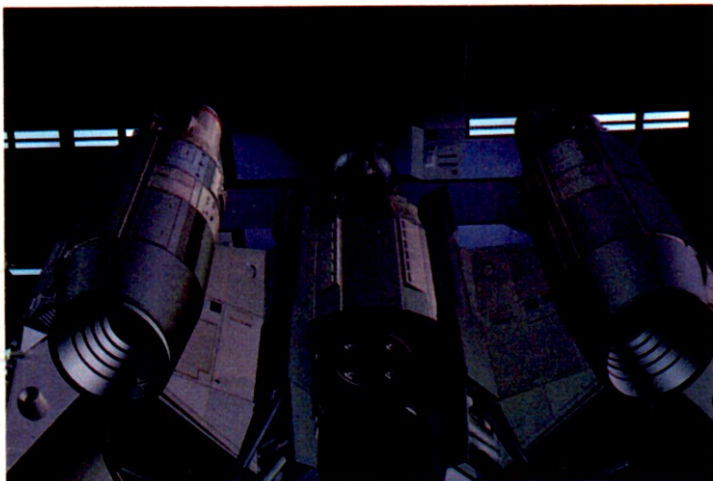
"If you keep a conventional effects image on the screen for five seconds, you may believe it, but if the same scene were to play for ten seconds, you'd begin to see enough about it to say, 'Uh-oh, that's not right.' You may not be able to say what it is, but you'd know that what you're looking at is not real. The advantage of using simulation is that you can play things longer on the screen. You don't have to cut

away because of physical set-ups, because your camera is going to bang into something or gravity is a problem in that particular set-up. You don't have those constraints in simulation because there is no actual physical camerawork involved.

"In terms of presenting action on the screen, we have an opportunity with simulation of bringing a new level of excitement to the screen from the creative use and exploitation of the computer simulation process.

"Of course, a strong story is essential, and underlying the script of *THE LAST STARFIGHTER* is a strong story, a story about people, about a young man who happens to have a particular kind of talent. He has a great adventure and winds up being the best there is. The special effects are there to serve the purpose of furthering that story. They were not meant to stand alone as special effects, but they are meant to present outer space in as acceptable a way and as easy a way as location photography does."

**Left:** During a "camera move" the Gunstar looms large in its hangar on the Rylosian moon. The perspective of the ship is a built-in function of the computer program that selects and moves the point-of-view of the scene. **Right:** A full shot of the hangar with several Gunstars in view, making this the most complex digitally simulated scene ever produced. Once the composition of a scene is fed into the computer, the director is free to place the camera POV and manipulate it in almost any way imaginable.

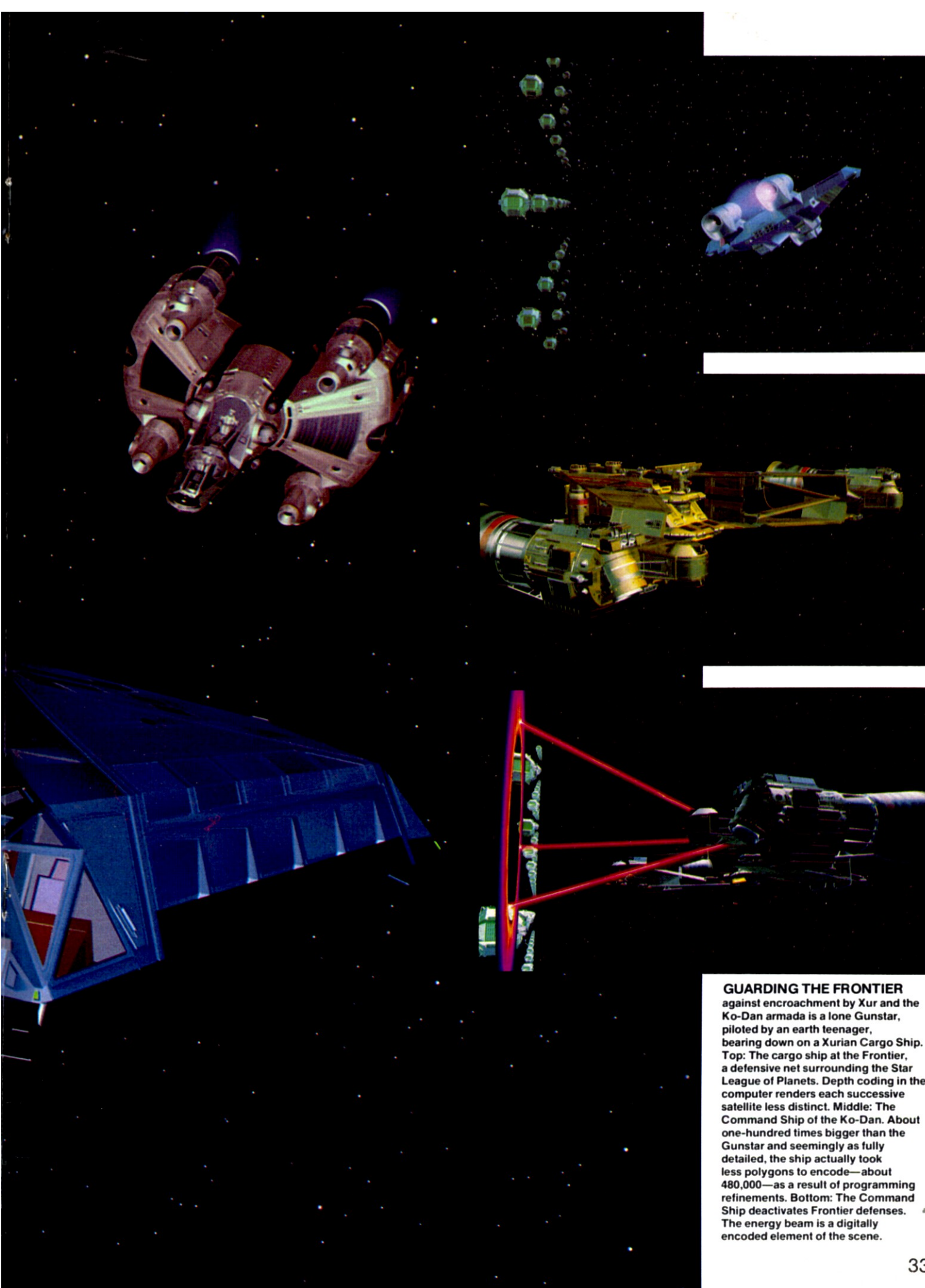


# COMPUTER ANIMATED SPECIAL EFFECTS

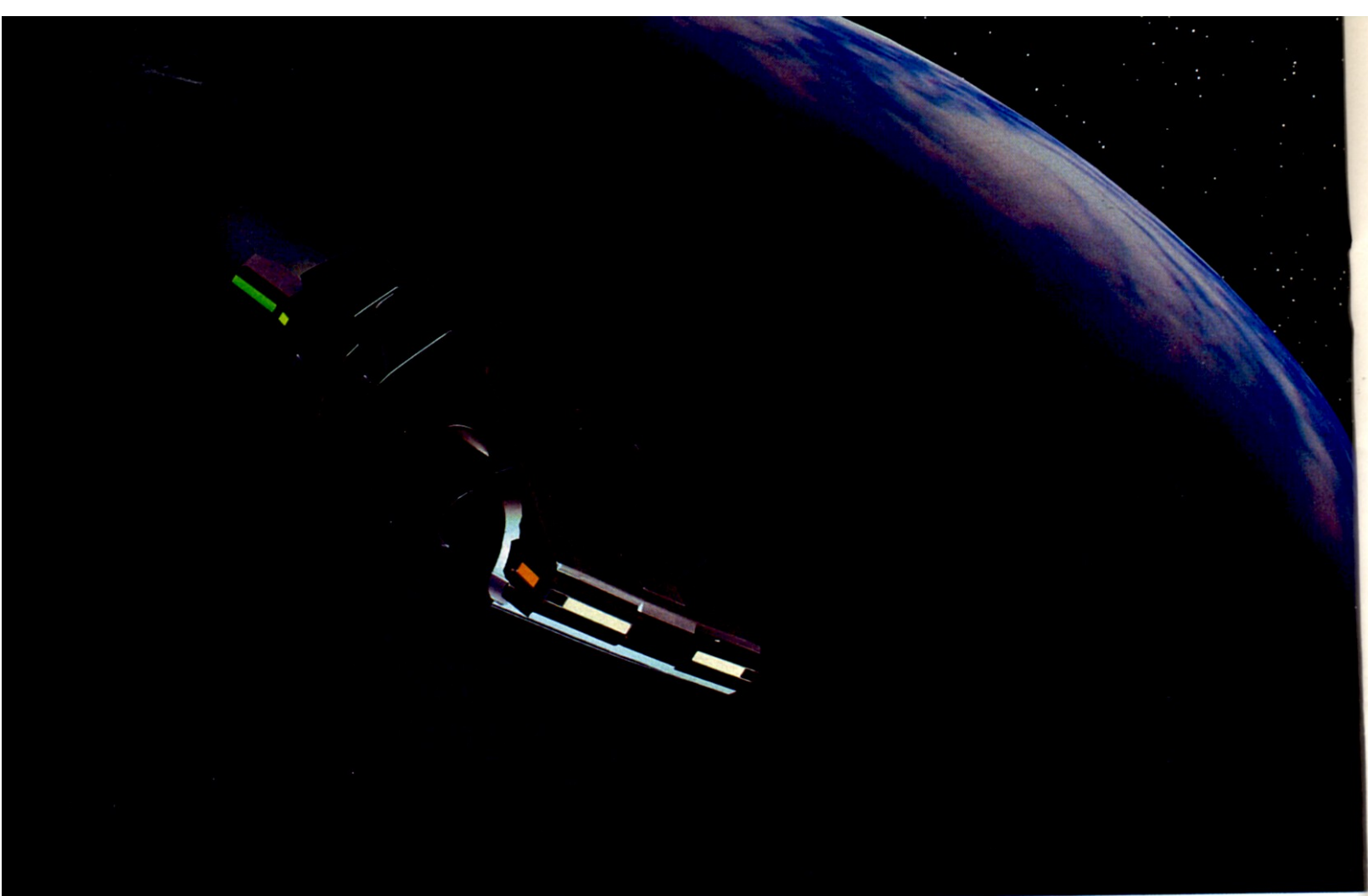
*For the story of Digital Productions see page 37...*







**GUARDING THE FRONTIER**  
against encroachment by Xur and the Ko-Dan armada is a lone Gunstar, piloted by an earth teenager, bearing down on a Xurian Cargo Ship. Top: The cargo ship at the Frontier, a defensive net surrounding the Star League of Planets. Depth coding in the computer renders each successive satellite less distinct. Middle: The Command Ship of the Ko-Dan. About one-hundred times bigger than the Gunstar and seemingly as fully detailed, the ship actually took less polygons to encode—about 480,000—as a result of programming refinements. Bottom: The Command Ship deactivates Frontier defenses. The energy beam is a digitally encoded element of the scene.



The Starcar takes off from Earth. The planet's surface was rendered by Ron Cobb as flat art, scanned by the computer and then mapped onto a planetary sphere.

An important issue raised by the new computer effects technology is how does it affect the art of the effects technician. "In the past, people initially came to computers with a negative prejudice and a lot of misunderstanding," said Whitney. "In the arts, there has been this really ridiculous idea that the computer will take over the creative role. What we're talking about is providing a tool that is a little bit easier to work with. Still, it's lots of hard work, but it is a little bit less laborious so what you get back is

the opportunity to spend more time dealing with the underlying creative issues. Those are the most important issues.

"The technology and the aesthetic have to be in balance with one another. You can't have one without the other, so how can you say one is more important? You have to recognize that both must be there. What you want to do is bring the highest level of quality possible to the task at hand in all aspects of operation. We encourage our people to be more comprehensive

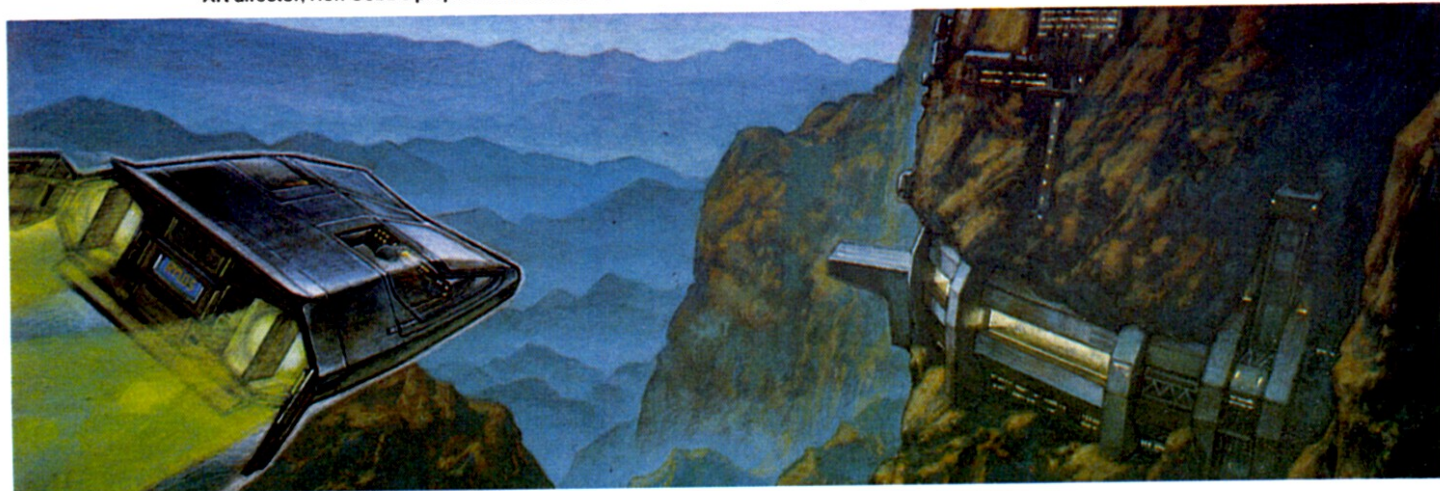
rather than to be specialists. A comprehensive person doesn't perceive a barrier in language between art and technology. Good art depends on an effective synthesis of art and technology."

John Whitney, Jr. and Gary Demos started Digital using a Cray I-S computer and later switched to the more sophisticated XMP which was used to produce the 250 simulation scenes in *THE LAST STARFIGHTER*. Explains Whitney, "We had the foresight to also order the XMP at the same time we

signed the contract for the I-S, knowing that the I-S would not be a powerful enough machine. We have expectations to acquire other computers in the future, as they become available, that will be superior to the XMP in both cost and performance.

"If you look at the cost per bit and the speed at which they compute, supercomputers are 4000 times more efficient and cost effective than a home personal computer. You could write software for the kind of images we produce for

Art director, Ron Cobb's preproduction sketch of the Starcar arriving at the Rylosian moon base of the Star League of Planets.



other computers, but you try to put this kind of detail together in one frame, and you can easily bog down almost any computer in existence today. Since a motion picture at sound speed runs at 1,440 frames per minute, if it takes you 24 hours or 100 hours or 200 hours of a computer's computational effort to create one frame, then you know that the equipment you're using isn't practical. It becomes quite clear that medium-sized main frame computers are not powerful enough to create an image that will suspend disbelief."

The problem of defining the degree of resolution needed to create an image capable of suspending the viewer's disbelief is a central one. According to Whitney, "One of the problems plaguing this field has been, 'What is sufficient resolution for theatrical purposes?' I've been an advocate of the idea that you can't get enough resolution electronically. Others will argue that if you take into account the entire film process (which includes projection and screen quality of individual theatres), 1000 or 2000 lines of resolution is adequate. Maybe they're right. It would certainly make things a lot easier.

"But we've tended to advocate higher resolutions than 2000 lines because of the following argument: I think that motion picture film is a remarkable product. It is capable of storing enormous amounts of information in a physically small space, relatively speaking. If you compare other storage media such as digital tape, they are nowhere near as efficient a storage medium. The amount of information held on a single frame of film is literally in the billions of bits. It is probably capable of a higher resolution than that.

"The resolution changes with the nature of the scene you are recording. A dark, low-contrast scene is not stored with as much information as a very bright, well-lit exterior scene. The film changes its resolution. It's hard to define technically what optimum resolution is, and that's one of the reasons it's so controversial because you can't pin it down.

"It's astounding how much data can be stored on 5247 [the standard film stock of the motion picture industry]. In fact, it's of a much higher quality than the electronic image, so that's always been my argument for saying you can't get enough resolution electronically. You need to have very high resolution electronic systems in order to eliminate the artifacts caused by low resolution which are immediate give-aways to the electronic origin of an image. If we're shooting in VistaVision, we'll compute more, whereas if the final product will be for television, we'll compute less. The way we've set things up, we can adjust it."

According to Whitney, the costs

# THE STARCAR

*Car customizer Gene Winfield had to match the computer image.*

Gene Winfield built the Starcar for THE LAST STARFIGHTER by extending a Volkswagen van chasis 14 inches longer and customizing a new exterior. An interior mock-up was built in the studio out of plywood for a scene shot inside the car because that allowed greater room for shooting, making use of removable sections for easy access. Winfield's car was given a simulated interior.

Winfield started building cars when he was in high school, and opened his own shop in Modesto, California after getting out of the Navy. He has been building specialized vehicles for the film, television, and modeling industries for several years. Winfield's credits include the STAR TREK shuttlecraft, the cars from THE MAN FROM U.N.C.L.E. and GET SMART, and the spinner in BLADE RUNNER.

The transportation coordinator from Lorimar Productions alerted Winfield to THE LAST STARFIGHTER as a potential project. From Ron Cobb's preproduction sketch, Gene Winfield placed a bid based on his owning the car after filming was completed. It took two and a half months to build and is made completely out of sheet metal except for the airfoil and a couple of pieces of outside decoration, making it a lot sturdier than the typical Hollywood "prop" car. Cobb came by the shop to make certain that Winfield's car and Cobb's own designs for the Cray XMP matched.

The wheels of the Starcar folding up upon take-off was accomplished by computer simulation; only one car body was designed without elaborate hydraulics. There was one problem that would make any custom car maker nervous. Due to time limitations, Winfield had to start working on the car before the designs had been finalized.

"I started building the car from the original sketches before they finished the actual fine line drawing. I had to make my car very close to their fine line drawing so that the car in the computer would match. That was no problem, just a matter of getting the drawing. They had to make a few minor changes at the last minute in the computer that I also had to change on the car, mostly detail on the back. I didn't end up

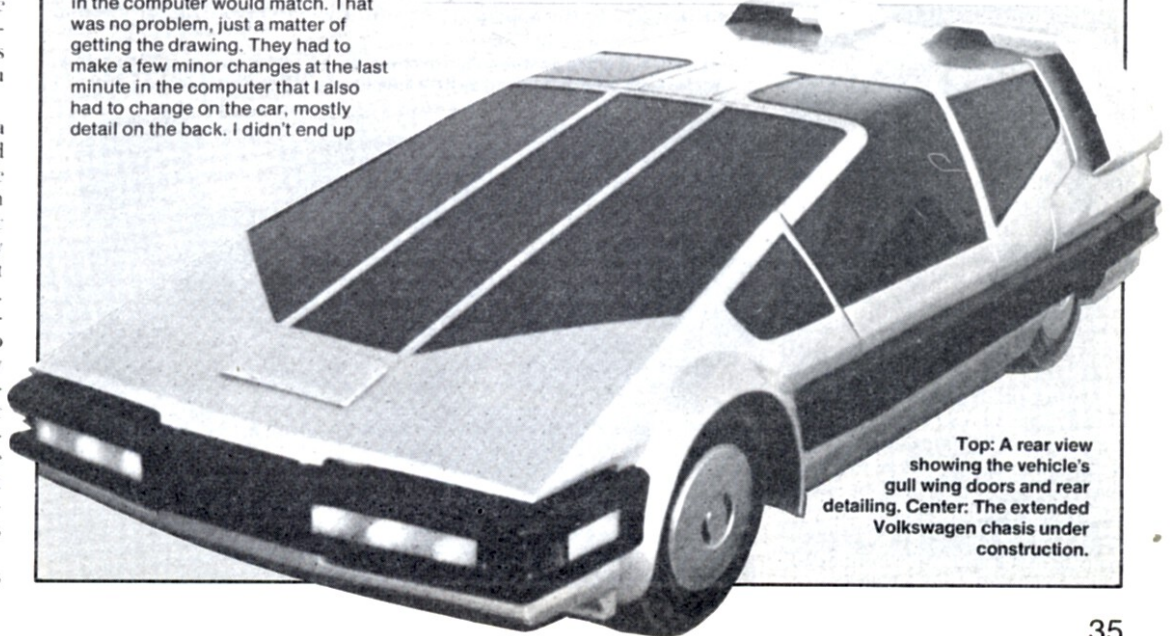
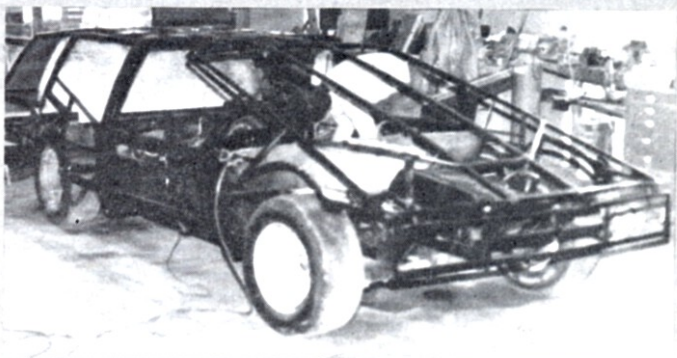
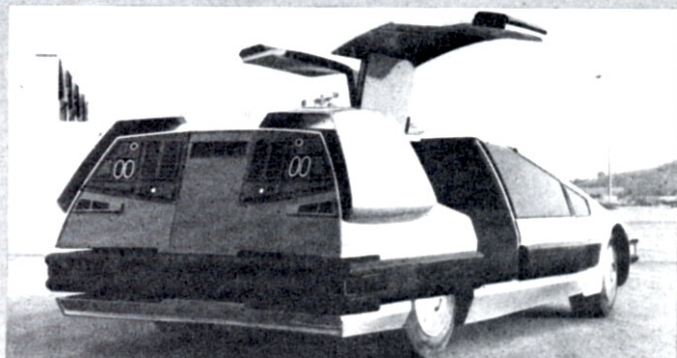
getting a drawing of that detail until they already had it in the computer. In fact, they brought me the polaroids off of the computer, and then I built the final trim and added the detail work on the back of the car."

The Starcar drives fairly well and is powered by a strong VW engine which has been bored out. The car has four gull-wing doors, two of which Winfield power operated with the potential of adding power to the other two. However, the right front door has a computer box behind it and so was never opened in the film. The car also has a power-operated divider window between the driver and the back seat.

The steering shaft was designed so

that the stock steering wheel could be removed and replaced with a specially designed steering handle. Ron Cobb designed the car to be as streamlined as possible and included flat panels and airfoils which add to its believability as a vehicle which zooms on both land and air.

Winfield's contribution also included the plexiglass work on the car which he made from a mock-up to get the actual shape and then heated a mold in his oven and fitted it to the car's dimensions. Like much of Winfield's other work, the final result has proven of such high quality that the Starcar will tour the country in various auto shows giving visitors a glimpse of a possible "car of the future."



Top: A rear view showing the vehicle's gull wing doors and rear detailing. Center: The extended Volkswagen chasis under construction.



**THE CRAY** and Digital Productions' founders Gary Demos (left) and John Whitney, Jr. The most powerful computational device available off-the-shelf, the Cray X-MP carries the whopping price tag of \$15 million. Standing only five feet wide and six-and-a-half feet tall, the computer weighs 15,000 pounds, jammed full of microchips, copper circuit boards and some 67 miles of wiring. The Cray can perform 160 million calculations a second, the kind of number crunching power that makes digital scene simulation affordable. About \$3,000,000 for 25 minutes of footage provided for THE LAST STARFIGHTER.

of effects production for THE LAST STARFIGHTER were about half of what similar effects using motion control would have cost, and motion control effects would have taken longer to produce and required a larger production team to get the same amount of work done.

The economics of computer simulation would not have been possible without the Cray XMP, which is capable of sustaining 160 million computations per second, especially important since computing the image for a single frame in THE LAST STARFIGHTER averaged 22½ billion computations. The Gunstar ship seen in the film is the most highly detailed object ever computer encoded, containing over 600,000 polygons.

While Digital's results have been impressive, there are still limitations in computer simulation despite methods constantly being tried to combat these problems. Some of the shots in THE LAST STARFIGHTER were sped up, and a little strobing becomes apparent when the ships move too fast, though this is not particularly noticeable nor distracting. Strobing is a problem encountered most frequently in stop-motion animation. Basically it is caused by the fact that the computer simulated object which moves is not blurred as a real object would be when photographed. Since each frame shows a clear, stationary image, the shots have an air of unreality to them.

During the making of THE LAST STARFIGHTER, the strobing was discussed, but no one was able to come up with a simple way to eliminate it. However, after THE LAST STARFIGHTER was completed, a practical method of overcoming the problem was discovered and Digital will be blurring fast moving objects in the future. This method was applied recently in a Fuji Film commercial showing a fast-moving film box.

However, several other techniques were perfected on THE LAST STARFIGHTER which help make the computer generated images more realistic. One of the biggest difficulties in miniatures is getting the lighting right because if the highlights, created by the distance between the model and its light source, are the wrong size, the result gives a false sense of scale. For THE LAST STARFIGHTER, once the colors are specified for a spacecraft, they never have to be specified again. The computer automatically adjusts the shades based on where the light source is indicated, and thus the shading, highlights, and shadows are automatically adjusted and the proper scale and believability is maintained.

In addition, Digital aged the Gunstar after each battle. A number of techniques were developed for modeling dents and stains onto the exterior of the ship, a far cry from the pristine, showroom look of most computer graphics. This aging, though subtle, gives an interactive feel to the visuals as if

the ship was being genuinely affected by the attacks of the Kodan armada.

In discussing the future possibilities of computer graphics, Whitney comments, "You can't do everything in this process, right now our best suit does not include fur on animals for instance, or the animation of characters, or even the expression of emotions on a human face, or the expression of speech from a human mouth. Those things cannot be done on a computer today in a way which we would accept as being believable. But there are many subjects that are well within our capability, and I think it's reached a point where we can sustain a business like we've created here. What you're seeing is the birth of a new process and these are its growing pains.

"The stereotype has emerged that computer generated imagery is restricted to a kind of hard-edged, cold look." Whitney added, "I think that the forte of computer graphics may well be the soft-edged, amorphous kind of image." At the moment Digital Produc-

The technical directing of the action in computer simulated scenes is done first in vector form on a previewing system supplied by Interactive Machines, Inc.



tions is working on exactly that kind of imagery for a sequence involving the cloud layers of Jupiter to be seen in 2010: ODYSSEY TWO scheduled for release this December.

Production designer Ron Cobb views the final result of the work on THE LAST STARFIGHTER with a mixture of pleasure and enthusiasm, though he does see some room for improvement. Some limitations imposed on THE LAST STARFIGHTER's effects were due to lack of time, causing some shots to be deprived of shadowing. For an object of great complexity that is shaded to also cast shadows doubles the time the computer takes to generate that image. Also, the fractal landscapes seen in an asteroid tunnel sequence in the film had to be cut down and simplified. (Fractal geometry is used to generate natural terrain such as the slightly stylized, simplified rock surfaces seen in the film.)

Cobb takes a realistic view of these limitations: "We knew it was all going to come to a big crunch," he said. "We were going to accomplish as much complexity and realism as we could and tax the system to the very breaking point, and we knew at the end when the crunch came, we'd have to retreat to whatever level it took to actually finish the picture. We were hoping that when we had to do that, we would still be able to put the maximum amount of innovation into the picture. I think that the system worked well on the whole.

"I feel that at least a third of the effects in the film attain photo-realism, they are almost flawless. I am very impressed and very pleased; it's certainly the most advanced stuff that's ever been done. People familiar with the techniques used to make these images will be utterly amazed. The average filmmaker who is not terribly concerned with the techniques behind the film will probably just assume that these dynamic, interesting images are models, which is extraordinary."

Years ago Whitney and Demos created a computer animated figure of a juggling magician called Adam Powers which was considered incredibly advanced for its time. Now Whitney looks forward to one day creating a full-fledged character using computer animation and exploring the possibilities of creating digital sound simulation to go with the image simulation techniques. New possibilities for fully shaded rather than wireframe scenes with applications for video game technology are also being explored. THE LAST STARFIGHTER may be just a film about a boy who becomes a starship gunner and saves the universe as if he were playing a videogame, but the effects for the film open the way towards incredible future possibilities. The boom in computer images is just beginning. □

# DIGITAL PRODUCTIONS

*John Whitney, Jr. and Gary Demos make computer imaging a movie star at last.*

Computer simulation has come a long way from its meager origins. John Whitney, Jr. started out in the field in 1960 at the age of 14. He worked with his father John Whitney, Sr., who is often considered the father of both motion control and advanced computer graphics.

The original computer used for computer animation utilizing motion control was actually designed as an anti-aircraft gun director. John Whitney, Sr. bought one of these early computers at a war surplus sale and adapted it to a newly conceived artform.

Whitney, Jr. vividly recalled the experience of opening up the box which contained this first "motion control" computer: "Inside this armour-plated 4-foot cubic volume was an amazing world of gears, cams, and selsens motors," he said. "There were some really unusual items. One was called a rotary crank. I believe Dad had to have been a genius. He took those rotary cranks out so as to mount them on a rear-lit animation stand. He was able to understand the crank's ability to manipulate art by hooking up new motors to the 'input' terminals controlling the rotary crank's differential velocities. In my opinion, that work marked the birth of motion control. In essence, the slitscan process was born from these mechanical analog computers."

Whitney, Jr., gained a great deal of his understanding of computers from work with his father's equipment and being exposed to his ideas. After graduating high school, he got a job working for Motion Graphics Incorporated in 1965, a company Whitney, Sr. formed to utilize the hardware he had invented for the production of special effects television commercials as well as special projects for feature films.

Whitney, Jr. became dissatisfied with the technical constraints of the work. In 1971, he crossed paths with Gary Demos, who became his partner. He also was introduced to raster graphics, a new technology that allowed for the display of shaded surfaces. The new technology proved to be the essential breakthrough that Whitney had been looking for and he dedicated himself

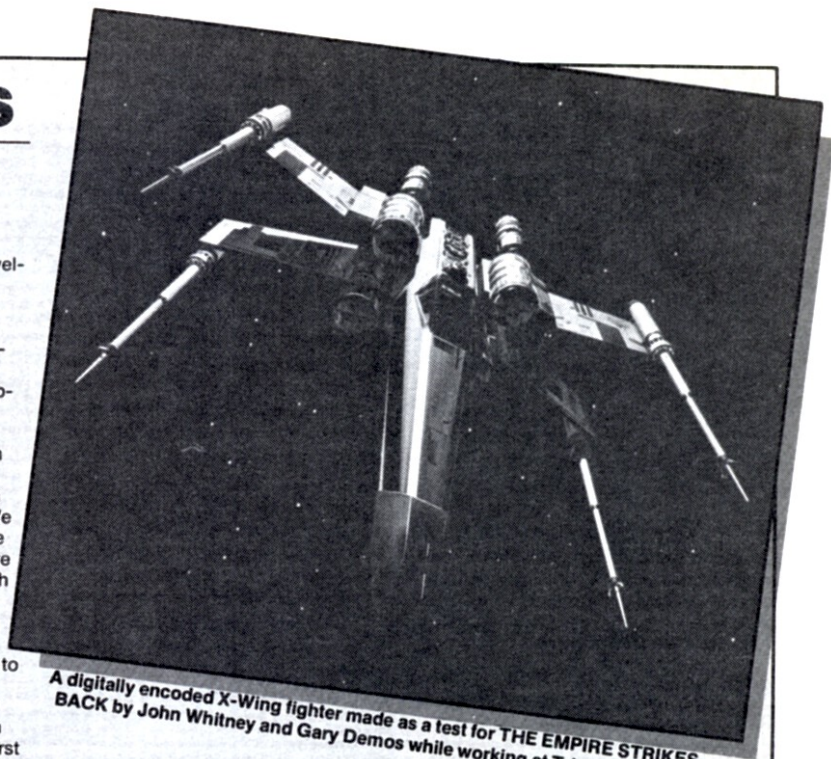
to becoming involved with the development and growth of computer graphics.

"In 1974," said Whitney, "Gary Demos and I proposed to Information International, Incorporated ('Triple-I') that they form a development group which we called 'The Motion Picture Project.' Our goal was to create high resolution, high quality color computer graphic images. We started on the job with almost no capabilities in-house. We had never made a single image, we had never worked with the software before, and we had never seen high resolution color recording equipment. Regardless, Ed Fredkin, the Chairman of the Board of Triple-I, believed there was sufficient merit to our proposal to fund the project.

"The task before us was a major undertaking that went on for seven years," continued Whitney. "The first order of business was to evaluate the existing body of software in the field. Ultimately, we settled on a special version of the Booknight algorithm. This code had been written at the University of Utah by Phong and Crow, who together had added what is now known as Phong shading and a new, if not the first, transparency function."

During a seven-year period, the original 2,500 lines of code were reduced to 50 lines. What emerged was a new program called 'Tranew' of which Demos was the principal author together with Frank Crow, and, to a lesser extent, Jim Blinn who acted as consultant.

"The corruption of the Booknight algorithm into Tranew followed a course dictated by the marketplace which fundamentally wanted everything," said Whitney. "Therefore, the algorithm had to be conceived to do everything. A new edge clipper was written [coding telling the computer to compute only what lies within the boundaries of the frame]. The capability to do shadows was added. Polygonal, quadric, and bi-cubic surface representations could share boundaries within a frame. A multiple light source capability was prepared. And, of course, the problems of anti-aliasing and anti-rastering had to be dealt with [both terms refer to the jagged, staircase



**A digitally encoded X-Wing fighter made as a test for THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK by John Whitney and Gary Demos while working at Triple-I in 1979.**

look of diagonal lines when scanned on a CRT)."

To prove the profitability of the new techniques, Whitney managed to market simulation work in such films as WESTWORLD and FUTUREWORLD. Other credits included: the Pyramid Films logo, the KCET logo, the CBS Television Network 50th Anniversary logo, a Wrangler commercial, and some advanced cigarette commercials for Brazil. Then news of a big and important computer simulation project called TRON reached Triple-I.

Remembered Whitney, "Prior to the forming of Digital Productions, Gary Demos and I did spend some time with Donald Kushner and Steven Lisberger [TRON's producer and director]. It had been our intention to work on the picture at Information International. But as things came to pass, while Information International did supply some of the computer graphics for the film, that was after Gary and I left."

Part of their promotional activities at Triple-I was to try and convince Lucasfilm that there was a role for computer simulation in their films. "We started talking to them at the time they were making STAR WARS," said Whitney. "When they were making THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK, we carried the discussions a little farther along and undertook an effort to encode an X-Wing spacecraft. We wound up publishing that picture on the cover of the August 1979 issue of *Computer* magazine concurrent with the Siglab conference which was taking place in Chicago that year."

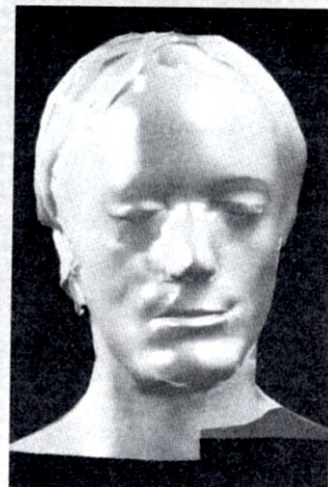
While Lucasfilm did show some enthusiasm, they could not agree on a price for simulated effects in THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK. However, Whitney and Demos did succeed in making the data base and proved that simulation could produce a sufficient level of detail to compete with miniatures.

After forming Digital Productions, the major work at hand proved to be THE LAST STARFIGHTER, though

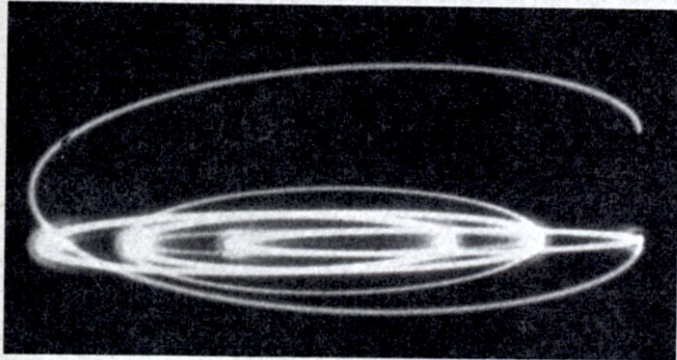
the company did continue to work on logos, commercials, and did the hyperspace jump seen in the film ICE PIRATES.

Whitney ended-up getting credited as STARFIGHTER's Associate Producer for acting as a liaison between Digital and Lorimar, the producer who initially undertook the project. His role was largely in helping the production from the management point of view, making certain that everything was done when it was supposed to be. Demos handled the overall technical hardware and software operations, working on optimizing the code to use the full advantages of the Cray and setting up a team of programmers who worked around the clock to refine the software. Whitney feels that the combination of their hardware and technical hands-on experience puts Digital three to five years ahead of anyone else in the business.

**Whitney and Demos supervised the encoding of a digitized clone of Peter Fonda seen in FUTUREWORLD.**



**A sample of the abstract computer graphics pioneered by John Whitney, Sr.**



# Supergirl

*Argo City's "Flying Nun" does battle with a second rate fortune teller in this new low for Superheroes.*

by Alan Jones

Is it a bird? It most certainly is! SUPERGIRL is a turkey of such epic proportions, it hardly seems possible that it came from the same Salkind producing stable that at least made a few valiant attempts at quality in their SUPERMAN series. The stunning wrong-headed banality of their latest offering seals the fate of any forthcoming superhero adaptations.

No other big-budgeted movie in recent memory ends up with so much stacked against it. The tiresome plot is a thinly veiled reworking of *Snow White*, pitting the subterranean kingdom of Argo City's answer to 'The Flying Nun' against a second rate fortune-teller for the undying affections of a muscular landscape gardener. That is really it! Sorceress Selena's power comes from a stray Omegahedron that escaped from Supergirl's dimension which she must recover in order to save her people from destruction.

While remaining reasonably faithful to the true comic book genesis of Clark Kent's long lost cousin, SUPER-



Above: Matterwand in hand, Zaltar (Peter O'Toole) demonstrates the power of the Omegahedron for Supergirl (Helen Slater). Below: Faye Dunaway as the witch, Selena, an ill-conceived supernatural villain who opposes Supergirl on Earth.

GIRL is doomed from the very start by a dull, lifeless, cliché-ridden script from David (THE DARK CRYSTAL) Odell. All told it's a boring, charmless exercise riddled with illogical motivation and a sloppy storytelling sensibility. There were script difficulties early on in this production's life, but if this is all Odell could come up with, what could the original draft have been like? Unfortunately, SUPERGIRL can't be taken on a high camp level either, as it never really goes over the top enough to warrant that description.

As for the actors, never have so many names been wasted for so little effect. Only Maureen Teely as Lucy Lane emerges with her credibility intact—the others would be better off forgetting this embarrassing experience. Peter O'Toole hams it up outrageously as Zaltar, the leader responsible for turning Argo City into a tacky shopping mall just by waving his silly Matterwand, the instrument that starts Supergirl's quest in the first place.

Faye Dunaway is all tepid fire and brimstone as Selena, a role that could





Newcomer Helen Slater as Supergirl, flying into theatres November 21 from Tri-Star Pictures.

well challenge *MOMMIE DEAREST* as the nadir of her career. As her side-kick Bianca, Brenda Vaccaro utters a series of wise-crack one liners that are so stilted, everyone of them stops the film dead in its tracks. Hart Bochner is the focus of all this bitchy, needless female attention and he is saddled with some impossible pseudo-Shakespearean lines, so it really isn't his fault that he comes across as an idiot of the first order. Watching Peter Cook, as Selena's former henchman, trying to break into the U.S. market once again in a vain hope to match his former partner Dudley Moore's success, has all the charm of watching major surgery. His role is the worst miscalculation of all, in a film rife with miscalculations.

As for Helen Slater as "Supergirl"—the less said the better. She

struggles in a dramatic vacuum on visible support wires looking like Kate Nelligan in her earthly persona of Linda Lee and a fresh faced Catherine Deneuve when she becomes "Supergirl". You can't believe in her for a second, unlike the way Christopher Reeve fit his part like a glove.

With a strong directorial hand behind *SUPERGIRL*, some of its fairy-tale aspirations might have been salvaged. But it looks like Jeannot Szwarc has been predictably overwhelmed by the controlling financial interests in the production. Whatever, it is his most heavy-handed, anonymous film to date. The fact that the same production team is due to embark on *SANTA CLAUS* should fill us with skepticism as to its future potential.

The shoddy studio-bound sets are

well matched in quality by the grainy, unconvincing special effects which look like leftovers from every post-*STAR WARS* movie. Apart from the visible wires everytime a flying stunt occurs (it is being decided if some of these scenes should be cut), Roy Field and Derek Medding's work has a tired, uninvolved feel about it. Any imagination at all will have to be supplied by the viewer. The climactic appearance of a gigantic hellish demon, looking suspiciously like a cross between *RETURN OF THE JEDI*'s Rancor Monster and *The Beast in KRULL*, only conjures up more apathy for the most lackluster finale in years. This shaky meshing of the occult with superpower mythology can only be termed as an unmitigated disaster.

Warner Brothers wisely passed on

releasing *SUPERGIRL*, for reasons that are now only too apparent. Unless you are a toddler, *SUPERGIRL* can only be classed as a debacle that will exceed even your worst expectations. □

### SUPERGIRL

A Tri-Star Pictures release. 11/84, 124 mins. Directed by Jeannot Szwarc. An Alexander Salkind film. Produced by Timothy Burrill. Executive producer Ilya Salkind. Screenplay by David Odell. Music composed and conducted by Jerry Goldsmith. Casting by Lynn Stalmaster.

Selena.....	Faye Dunaway
Supergirl/Linda Lee.....	Helen Slater
Zaltar.....	Peter O'Toole
Alura.....	Mia Farrow
Bianca.....	Brenda Vaccaro
Nigel.....	Peter Cook
Zor-El.....	Simon Ward
Jimmy Olsen.....	Marc McClure
Ethan.....	Hart Bochner
Lucy Lane.....	Maureen Trefy

Left: Supergirl and Zaltar on one of Krypton's surviving Moons. Right: Supergirl and Bianca (Brenda Vaccaro) watch as Selena performs some sorcery.



# REVIEWS

## Spock's "Who's got the katra?" routine lacks only a polka beat

### STAR TREK III: THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK

A Paramount release, 6.81, 100 mins. In color and dolby stereo. Directed by Leonard Nimoy. Screenwriter and producer, Harve Bennett. Executive consultant, Gene Roddenberry. Music by James Horner. Director of photography, Charles Correll. Editor, Robert Shugre. Visual effects, Industrial Light & Magic. Supervisor of special visual effects, Kenneth Ralston. Special effects supervisor, Bob Dawson. Set designer, Cameron Birnie.

James T. Kirk ..... William Shatner  
Mr. Spock ..... Leonard Nimoy  
Dr. Leonard McCoy ..... DeForest Kelley  
Engineer Montgomery Scott ..... James Doohan  
Pavel Chekov ..... Walter Koenig  
Hikaru Sulu ..... George Takei  
Uhura ..... Nichelle Nichols  
Lt. Saavik ..... Robin Curtis  
Dr. David Marcus ..... Merritt Butrick

by Joseph Francavilla

The time has come, the critic said, to talk of many things: of STAR TREK, STAR TREK II, STAR TREK III, of tribbles, Vulcan flings, why the Genesis world boils hot, and, if Klingon ships have wings.

Like Alice's Wonderland, the Star Trek universe has now become a fantasy land of the popular imagination with the latest offering, STAR TREK III: THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK. To anyone not in suspended animation for the last two decades, Kirk and Spock are as familiar a pair of names as Tweedledee and Tweedledum.

In this sequel to THE WRATH OF KHAN, the enterprising crew led by old Kirk again manage to take a starship not really meant for them, and they endeavor "to boldly go where no man has gone before," surely one of the most famous split infinitives in the English language. In this case, the *Enterprise* crew go to the forbidden planet of Genesis, despite opposition from Klingons and Star Fleet Command, to find Spock's body and join it by Vulcan rite to his *katra* or soul safely deposited in McCoy's roomy mind.

If the first Star Trek movie had people difficult to tell from the androids and was heavy on the metaphysics and special effects and light on characterization and storyline, then STAR TREK II was heavy on the one-two punch of action-adventure and light on substance and speculative ideas. THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK is the most balanced and well-rounded of the three, and though it sometimes seems like a wide-screen TV show, it proves that people are more interesting than things, machines, chases, or explosions.

Leonard Nimoy as director deserves the credit on this latest successful mission of the *Enterprise* crew. Using essentially the same personnel who were involved in the last film, Nimoy has this time explored the relation-



The Vulcans of STAR TREK III: Dame Judith Anderson as High Priestess (left) who presides over Spock's reincarnation; Mark Lenard as Sarek, Spock's father; and director Leonard Nimoy as Mr. Spock (inset).



ships between the main characters and their memory of, and search for, Spock. Eschewing the Lucasfilm type comic book heroes, Nimoy has concentrated on the actors, exploring their emotions and loyalties for one another. With a leisurely pace—which may not suit all those with an attention span of less than one stunt or special effect per minute—Nimoy's direction emphasizes the human interactions we all can identify with.

In other words, Nimoy has succeeded in making this film "not for trekkies only." Providing he or she can stay awake through the recap of Spock's death in clips from the last film, anyone can understand and enjoy THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK without reference either to the previous films or to the TV series.

Outstanding performances are given by Mark Lenard as Spock's concerned father, and by Christopher Lloyd as the intelligent, resourceful, and powerful Klingon, Lord Kruge, whose fascinating portrayal of this malevolent but well-motivated being shows that—in the acting profession at least—a thing of evil is a joy forever. Shatner's performance is wide-ranging and fairly credible, considering his acting sometimes can be too broad for a Greek amphitheatre.

James Doohan and DeForest Kel-

ley have the most quips to provide comic relief, but Doohan's lines seem more like trekkie humor while DeForest Kelley's are always in character. For instance, Scotty's line to the turbolift voice, "up your shaft" is just a throwaway, whereas McCoy's line to the alien in the bar, "How can you be deaf with ears like that?" is typical of his exasperated, sometimes less-than-xenophilic attitude.

Hamming it up more than Shatner as Kirk ever did in the TV series, Captain Esteban (Phillips R. Allen) commands the U.S.S. Grissom in a way which certainly would have made an ashamed Gus turn over in his space capsule. The younger players are stiff and inhibited, and Merritt Butrick as Dr. David Marcus actually delivers to Captain Esteban one line about taking risks which sounds like Beaver Cleaver asking his reluctant dad for a bigger allowance. Perhaps it was wise to kill him off without leaving his *katra* under anyone's hat.

The film is also well-made in integrating the special effects by Industrial Light and Magic into the story, so that these effects seem natural, part of the background which never upstages the people. The model work for the space ships, especially the space station sequence and the weird but magnificent Klingon *Bird of Prey* is probably the best of the three Star Trek films. The only disappoint-

ment is Lord Kruge's pet dog, probably named "fangs", who seems like a grotesque refugee from the Disney Channel with the canine's awful and obvious mechanical motions and eyeblinking.

The attempt to have the Klingons actually speak their own language in the film was admirable—certainly better than making them speak Pidgin English like the Indians used to in old westerns—but why the Klingons suddenly fall back upon speaking English among themselves is as mysterious as making the *Enterprise* crew suddenly give orders to each other in Pig Latin.

But the story often has the feel of an overextended TV plot, the same disease that infected the other Star Trek

films. It is too simple and obvious; there are no real twists, deceptions, surprises, revelations, or reversals. Who else, except Spock can the child on Genesis be? Peter Pan? Isn't it obvious (except to Kirk) that McCoy is the key to Spock's survival, after McCoy starts playing Charlie McCarthy to Spock's Edgar Bergen?

There are also annoying lapses in the storyline, where things *are* because the characters say they are. Why exactly is Spock aging while he is on Genesis? Because Dr. Marcus, without explanation, says he is? And what is the reason Spock stops aging rapidly when he's taken off the planet? Speeded-up evolutionary development and mutation of the microbes on the capsule seems to be utterly confused with rapid aging.

Spock, as he matures to middle age, is supposed to go through his mating urge, *pon farr*, every seven years. Isn't that an awful lot of time for Lt. Saavik on Genesis to be rubbing him the right way? Finally, the "Who's got the *katra*?" routine is a far-fetched, hokey, last-minute improvisation, lacking only a polka beat. Spock, the film wants us to believe, just has to put his "soul" somewhere, and he had no pockets, so McCoy, who fortunately didn't have a lot on his mind at

continued on page 54



# Nothing justifies or enlivens film's other-worldly setting

## STREETS OF FIRE

A Universal-RKO release, 5 84, 98 mins. In color and Dolby stereo. Directed by Walter Hill. Produced by Lawrence Gordon and Joel Silver. Written by Walter Hill and Larry Gross. Executive producer, Gene Levs. Special musical material supervisor, Jimmy Iovine. Musical score, Ry Cooder.

Tom Cody ..... Michael Pare  
 Ellen Aim ..... Diane Lane  
 Billy Fish ..... Rick Moranis  
 McCoy ..... Amy Madigan  
 Raven ..... Willem Dafoe  
 Reva ..... Deborah Van Valkenburgh  
 Ed Price ..... Richard Lawson  
 Officer Cooley ..... Rick Rossovich  
 Clyde ..... Bill Paxton  
 Greer ..... Lee Ving

by Kyle Counts

Director Walter Hill says in the linear notes on the *STREETS OF FIRE* soundtrack album that the movie is "by design, comic-book in operation, mock-epic in structure, movie-heroic in acting, operatic in visual style, and cowboy cliché in dialogue"—which sounds rather like a case of talking up inferior goods, and not unlike an apology for the film's shortcomings.

One could look at *STREETS OF FIRE* as Hill's contemporary version of the traditional Hollywood musical—thus its 'rock and roll fable' tag—or as the first full-length rock video. (Some of the film's musical sequences have been aired on MTV.) But the movie is a bust on both levels: there is little attempt to integrate the music into the narrative framework like *FAME* or *FOOTLOOSE*, and, while Andrew Laszlo's photography is slick, the film is never witty or engaging enough to fully support the dramatic visuals. Worse, the songs created for Ellen Aim and the Attackers are overproduced, power pop throwaways, rendered in the bombastic style of Bonnie Tyler (no coincidence when you discover that the songs' producer, Jim Steinman, has worked with Tyler). Small wonder that Bruce Springsteen, whose song, "Streets of Fire," served as inspiration for the film, pulled the plug at the last minute.

The concept—one could hardly

call it a story—takes place in what Hill and co-writer Larry Gross call *the other world*—a sort of parallel Earth (referred to in a title card as *Another Time, Another Place* that looks like a hybrid of 60's and 80's subcultures set in a New York/Chicago/Hollywood sound stage slum. The script deletes all references to past history, church, school, and parents; like *WILD IN THE STREETS*, the under-30 set seems to rule the roost of these bombed-out environs. That's as far as the fantasy elements go: there's no explanation for the state of the world, and nothing special done to either justify or enliven the *Other World* backdrop.

The opening of the film bristles with energy: quick shots—punctuated by a sharp new optical wipe—of teenagers dolling themselves up and dashing across neon-lit, rain-soaked streets to attend a benefit concert being given by Ellen Aim (Diane Lane, a punk phenomenon in the little-seen *LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: THE FABULOUS STAINS*, in her second outing as a rock star), as Ry Cooder's gritty rock music swells on the soundtrack.

In the middle of her opening number, "Goin' Nowhere Fast" (soon to become the film's epitaph) Ellen is kidnapped by a biker gang known as the Bombers. Ellen's friend, Reva (Deborah Van Valkenburgh), sends out an S.O.S. for Tom Cody, a derring-do mercenary (played in stock mannequin fashion by baby-faced macho man Michael Pare, who had a turn as a rock singer in *EDDIE AND THE CRUISERS*) who comes on like a former classmate of Billy Jack's; within minutes of his arrival in town (in a stolen car), he makes short work of a bunch of hoods with a coat rack and throws them through the plate glass window of Reva's cafe, a small taste of the violence still to come.

Cody (closer to the psychopathic Cody Jarrett portrayed by James Cagney in *WHITE HEAT* than Buffalo



Derring-do mercenary Tom Cody (Michael Pare) raises hell.

Bill Cody) is the classic Western cowboy-Hill hero: a loner with a cool gunfighter's exterior that masks an at-the-boiling-point inner tension. Like other Hill heroes, he doesn't offer much about his past (except that he was once in the army and, despite his modellish good looks, isn't lucky with women) or his ambitions, and Hill and Gross wouldn't have it any other way, lest they spoil his character's supposed enigmatic virtues. (Hill quote: "In my films, when somebody puts a gun in your face, character is how many times you blink.") Since silent rage is about all Pare has to work with, it's no wonder he blinks a lot in this movie.)

Cody's mission, ostensibly to collect the ten grand Ellen's boyfriend-manager, Billy Fish (SCTV's talented Rick Moranis, sadly misused in an unsympathetic wimp role) has offered to pay for Ellen's return, is really an act of sentiment. It seems he and Ellen used to be an item but Cody, man's man that he is, couldn't see himself existing in the shadow of Ellen's musical success, and split.

With back-up support from McCoy (a barely recognizable Amy Madigan, from *LOVE CHILD*), a walking arsenal who is Hill's idea of a tough woman (i.e., one who acts like a man but is never as powerful as the real, uh, McCoy), Pare picks off several bikers with a rifle (lots of well-executed pyrotechnics and stuntwork equals empty spectacle), and dashes in and frees Ellen, blowing up a square mile radius of buildings for good measure. In the course of events, he also hijacks a bus with a black singing group aboard (the fictional Sorels provide the best overall musical moments in the movie), destroys a convoy of police cars and has a showdown with the Bomber's leader, Raven (Willem Dafoe, perfectly repellent as the chalk-faced humanoid), using the most gentlemanly of weapons: sledgehammers. (Anybody in the mood for an old John Wayne movie?)

Even after his victory is complete, and he enjoys a quickie reunion with a grateful Lane (a captivating performer whose acting here is so passive

that it borders on sleepwalking), Cody realizes that it's time to move on. Watching one last time from the wings as Ellen performs again in concert, our self-possessed avenger hitches a ride with the equally aimless McCoy, and they drive off into the neon glow of the Universal backlot.

According to Hill, *STREETS OF FIRE* is the kind of film he would have wanted to see as a teenager. Judging by the film's quick demise at the box office, Hill may have underestimated today's youth in thinking that souped-up cars, break-neck stunts and rock muzak (exceptions: Dan Hartman's *I Can Dream About You*, and the Blasters' *One Bad Stud*) would be all that was needed to lure them into the theatre. Learned adults presumably have by-passed the film because they have had their fill of paeans to guns and violence, and are, by now, wise to the chest-beating machismo that films of this kind endorse.

*STREETS OF FIRE* is an extension of sorts of Hill's rock-tinged fantasy, *THE WARRIORS*. Yet, despite an overall numbing effect, *THE WARRIORS* succeeded on many levels—

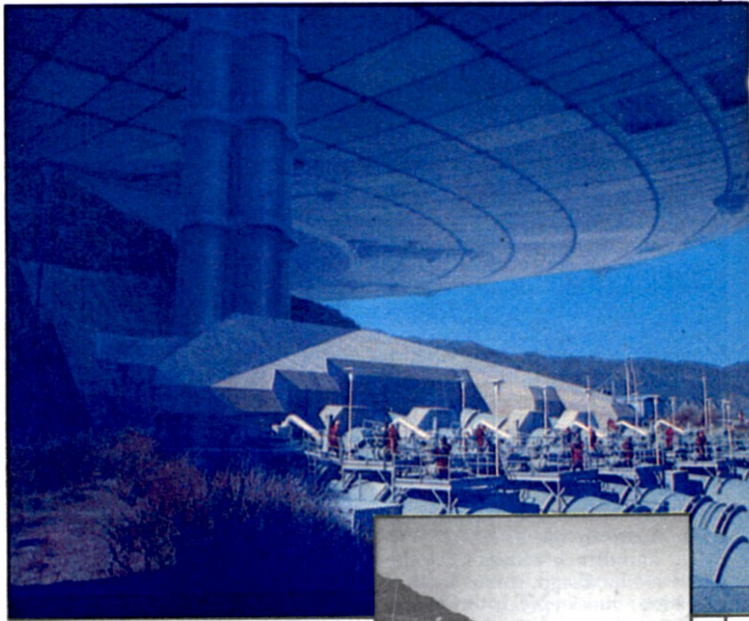
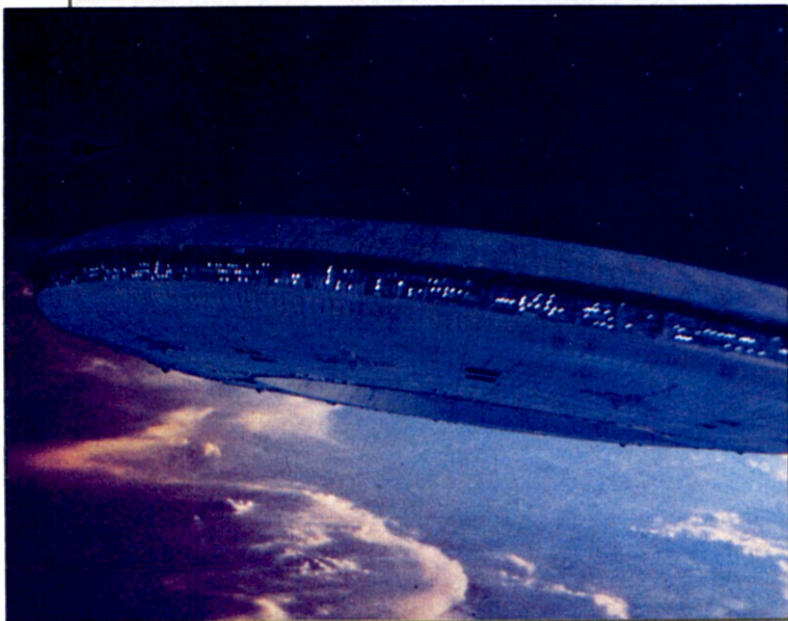
continued on page 59

Walter Hill directs Amy Madigan.



John Vallone's production design echoes *BLADERUNNER*.





## V: THE FINAL BATTLE effects by David Stipes Productions

After the successful contributions made by David Stipes Productions (DSP) to the miniseries *V*, it was inevitable that the special effects facility would be tapped to work on the sequel, *V: THE FINAL BATTLE*.

"The biggest problem with the second show was that there was very little time to plan and very little time to execute," said Richard Bennett, special effects supervisor on the *V* sequel and chief designer and manufacturer for the motion control systems at DSP. "We literally had less time to do more show, for a lot less money."

DSP's involvement with the sequel began in January. The majority of the shots in the show were to be a re-use of elements generated for the first *V*, a decision based on time and economics. The task that fell to DSP was to design photographically what they could shoot as background plates in order to use the old ship elements and make them seamlessly blend. DSP supervised at each location the arrangement of equipment and personnel for the director, and explained to the crew precisely what camera angles would be needed for the live action plates.

David Stipes, in charge of compositing and supervising the structure of the mattes rendered by Jena Holman and Dan Curry, had three paintings to deliver by the show's April 10 due date. All of them depicted the 3-mile wide alien motherships parked over a water pumping station, siphoning off the world's water supply. Using a twin projector system for the key matte, Stipes was able to simultaneously project two process plates onto the matte stand to save time: one of the three-foot miniature saucer and the other of the live-action plate of the real water pipes with soldiers milling about. Stipes added extra water pipes, shadows, and painted in the

mountains and sky. As an additional touch, an insert of a scout ship flying under the larger saucer was also put in.

The other two matte paintings were day and night versions of a shot looking up at the expansive mothership from the bottom of a hill, with a water pipe added that leads to the ship, ship lights and a portion of the surrounding hillside painted in. For the night version, Adam Berger worked out all the filtering, created light areas on the scaffolding and ship, and devised the sequencing of the ship lights.

Berger also worked with effects cameraman Michael Karp on two motion control shots of the alien starship soaring through space in an approach to Earth and, later, flying away from the planet. Both were done as original negative composites: first, a matte of the model was shot onto hi-contrast negative film, then processed, and bi-packed with the saucer footage. The backgrounds of the Earth and stars were then exposed onto the negative.

Two key high-speed miniature shots were also created for the show, one a nightmare sequence where rebel leader Julie undergoes a brain-washing in the alien conversion chamber and imagines that she is being chased by giant reptiles, and the other involving a water pump station dynamited by the rebels.

For the first, modelmaker Cary Howe built a match miniature of the corridor set, and a 14-foot python called 'Bubbles' was filmed slithering towards the camera. With time running short and the Bubbles footage dismissed as too tame, Marc Kolodziejyk was called in to design and construct a rod puppet he christened 'Fang'—the 'snake' that is seen in the final cut. Additionally, a trained iguana—nicknamed 'Fast Eddy'—was used for a shot where a reptile crashes through the corridor wall. After numerous fouled takes, Eddy had to be pushed through the breakaway wall by his trainer, and the shot filmed at high speed.

The other hi-speed scene was the flooding of the underground pump

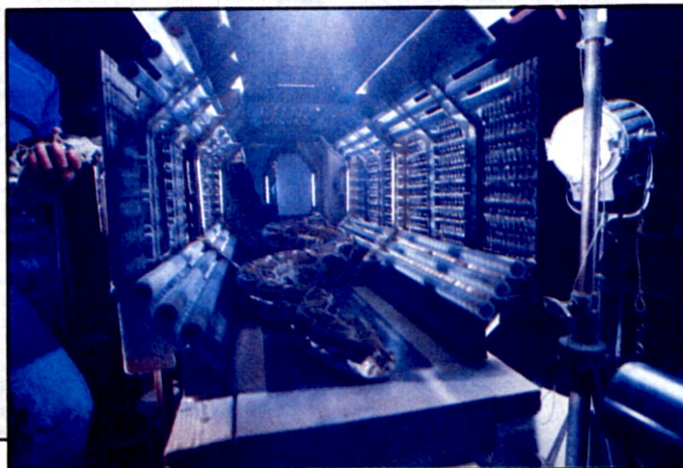
**Left: Greg Jein's three-foot mothership model composited with a ten-inch NASA photo of earth. Right: A composite of the alien's water siphoning station. The saucer is Jein's model rear-projected, with matte elements painted on glass. Inset: The scene's live-action plate.**

station. The 201-foot set, filmed at an actual sewage and pumping plant, was painstakingly duplicated in 1/12th scale, including all riveting detail, valves and turns, by Howe and a support crew. The water pipes were then rigged to burst open and release water on cue via a computerized triggering system devised by Tony Dublin, who worked from a storyboard. The result: a perfect union of full-scale live action and expertly-crafted miniature.

Bennett and effects editor Richard McCullough also handled the planning of the show's laser effects. Dailies in hand, they sat down with a Movieola and a field chart to plot the direction of each laser blast. Bennett would mark the lasers in white grease pencil and McCullough would 'scribe' the work print. A black and white print was struck from the work print, which was then sent to the rotoscoping staff at Pacific Title and Optical, usually 40 or 50 shots in a reel at a time. For the slow-motion sequence wherein Marc Singer and the actor playing his son are felled by lasers, each shot was plotted in perspective so that the 'hits'—a pyro effect with a squib that was tripped off-camera—would grow larger as the fireballs hurled toward the camera.

David Stipes has been tagged by the producers to supply effects for the upcoming *V* television series (see page 22). NBC has ordered 13 one-hour episodes of the program.

**A fourteen-foot python inside Cary Howe's miniature mothership corridor.**



Story of alien invasion developed with astonishing dumbness

V: THE FINAL BATTLE

NBC-TV. A Warner Brothers release. 5/84, 300 mins. In color. Directed by Richard T. Heffron. Teleplay by Brian Taggart and Peggy Goldman. Story by Lillian Weezer, Peggy Goldman, Faustus Buck, Diane Frolow, Harry and Renee Longstreet. Producer, Dean O'Brien. Co-Producer, Patrick Boyriven. Executive Producers, Daniel H. Blatt and Robert Singer. Created by Kenneth Johnson. Music by Barry De Vorzon and Joseph Conlan. Director of Photography, Stevan Larner A.S.C. Supervising Editor, Michael Eliot A.C.E. Special Effects, Gene Grigg.

Mike Donovan	Marc Singer
Julie	Faye Grant
Diana	Jane Badler
Steven	Andrew Prine
John	Richard Herd
Father Andrew	Thomas Hill
Kristine	Jenny Sullivan
Eleanor	Neva Patterson
Daniel	David Packer
Robin	Blair Telkin

by Joseph Francavilla

In May 1983, the two-part, four-hour film, *V*, premiered on network television. It's budget was an unprecedented \$14 million and it was watched by over 65 million viewers. To those of us who thought that reasonably intelligent science fiction was extinct on network TV, having been killed off by the likes of *BATTLESTAR GALAXATIVE*, it was a pleasant surprise to find a fairly interesting, initial two-hour installment which was also a popular success.

When told to produce a sequel to be ready by May 1984, creator, writer, and director Kenneth Johnson wouldn't be rushed and instead declined. Other cooks started spoiling the soup, and I'm sorry to say that *V*, probably the best science fiction one could expect these days from network TV, greatly declined also, as seen in the six-hour mini-series sequel, *V: THE FINAL BATTLE*. The sequel is neither a good film, good science fiction, nor original.

The story continues the development of the underground resistance movement near Los Angeles which struggles to expose and destroy the "friendly" aliens called "Visitors" who are made-up to appear human but are really reptilian conquerors who like to eat mice raw. They've actually come to Earth in their gigantic spaceships to steal all our water and to ship humans as frozen food back to their planet.

The plot of alien invasion, a time-honored tradition in science fiction, is here developed with astonishing ridiculousness. The rebels decide their best bet is to expose the alien commander John on TV during prime time. They lose many lives but manage to overpower the guards and show the world his ugly (shudder, shudder) lizard face. It makes no difference because further

broadcasts by the aliens explain this all away as rebel propaganda. At this point, the viewer senses that maybe the rebels aren't too bright and perhaps deserve to be shipped out and eaten as frozen TV dinners.

There is a subplot concerning a teenager pregnant with an alien child. She gives birth to an unusual human child who speaks with a "forked" tongue and to an alien twin who looks like a cross between Gummy and a baby crocodile, and made of very inferior latex. The alien baby dies (what a cop-out) soon after in the operating room due to a lack of interest.

When all seems lost for the aliens, the alien commander Diana tries to set off a nuclear bomb aboard the mothership. The unusual human child helps the helpless rebels on board and stops the detonation in the nick of time by apparently absorbing the nuclear force, without explanation through the magic of special effects. (In the original script the nuclear weapon was to explode in the atmosphere, but the special effects for this scene were considered too expensive.) Diana escapes, like Darth Vader, in a small spacecraft. The rebels smile. Flags wave. Crowds on Earth cheer. Everybody hugs everybody else.

The concoction of silliness which tries to pass for a story is full of old science fiction plots and *STAR WARS* images, stretched out over a heavy-handed Nazi allegory. The filmmakers try to appeal to everyone by mixing every known type of TV drama into the film.

What makes this allegorical treatment of Nazism so muddled is that the creators of the film seem unaware that their heroes are just as guilty of

the nationalism, xenophobia, and racism which was Nazism and which the film purports to attack. For example, Mike's line, "Here we go. One live lizard," and his mad bomber friend's line as he looks at a dead, bleeding Visitor's body, "Now that's a waste of good luggage," both are typical of the racist patriotism we've seen too often in World War II propaganda films.

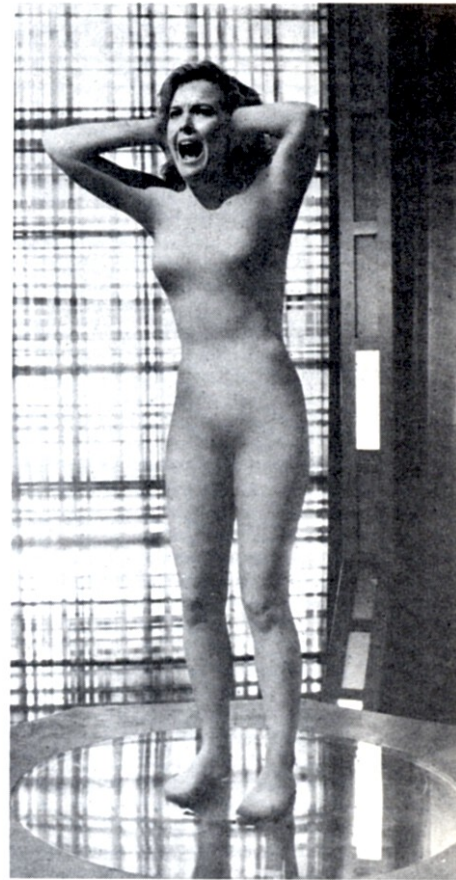
The ludicrous devices—siphoning off all our water for their Gator Ade, and insisting on having us for dinner, rather than our rodents—upon which the plot limply hangs are, unlike the mice which slide down the Visitor's gullets, too big to swallow. And with the exception of strong performances by Jane Badler as the evil Visitor Diana, Andrew Prine as the suave alien Steven, and David Packer as the traitorous Daniel, the dismal acting and trite, platitudinous dialogue is straight out of *Three's Company* meets *As the World Turns*.

So what's left to like? Well, the sappy hero and heroine leading the rebels to victory, the chases, rescues, shootouts, torture chambers, laser guns, and spacecraft. And there are always the special effects, right? Except that the effects are not as flamboyant, stunning, or abundant as in the very first two-hour segment of *V* a year ago. Shots of the motherships seem repetitive, and only one brief matte shot of the gigantic siphoning system was outstanding. Everything else—the green rubber baby lizard, the obvious model human infant, actual lizards filmed in slow motion to give the illusion of size (shades of the 1960 version of *THE LOST WORLD*), and the sprinkle dust that seems to go through the unusual child's body—is far below par.

Network TV, the sincerest form of imitation, the great mediocrity maker, and that great leveler of towering ideas and Olympian standards, is very much inside of this inbred TV movie because the mini-series is a veritable compendium of types of TV drama.

The initial alien invasion story preys upon America's paranoia about being conquered and our instinctive fear and loathing of things reptilian. Next the story turns into a police show, with car chases up and down the street.

Then it shifts into a World War II commando spy thriller with martial music and drum rolls, where the rebel army rigs charges to blow up a fortress, complete with a shootout inside (where every bad guy is a bad shot) and the wounded guy who stays behind to cover the retreat.



The Visitors brainwash Julie (Faye Grant) by subjecting her to psychological torture and elaborate special effects.

Jane Badler as the evil Diana, discovering to her chagrin that she has not killed Donovan, but an alien imposter.



Next, we have to endure family melodrama, where the lover or son is kidnapped and rescued, and where teenage pregnancy is always a cause for fathers to despair. Blending into this is the soap opera, where catty, powerful women are constantly bickering, teenage abortion is always a hot topic for debate, and dull romantic interludes between the hero and heroine help us waste our time.

Let's not forget the doctor show, where we see life and death in the operating room before our eyes as characters in white smocks say, "scalpel!" the way most of us say, "Pass the butter." Finally, there is the birth of the monster babies that reminds us of late-night horror shows and more recent films like *ROSEMARY'S BABY*, *DEMON SEED*, and *IT'S ALIVE*.

Despite the fact that, as far as science fiction is concerned, network TV has dropped the ball and lost it yet again, this hodgepodge of TV genres may also help explain the popularity of *V: THE FINAL BATTLE*: TV viewers like to be reminded of what's been on and what's currently on TV as they're watching it. With this mini-series, TV is the frightful visitor that feeds upon itself and upon us. □

# Dante's ribald comic-horror dares to alienate its audience

## GREMLINS

A Warner Brothers release. 6/84, 109 mins. In color and dolby stereo. Directed by Joe Dante. Producer, Michael Finnell. Written by Chris Columbus. Executive producers: Steven Spielberg, Frank Marshall, Kathleen Kennedy. Music by Jerry Goldsmith. Director of photography, John Hora. Production designer, James H. Spencer. Gremlins created by Chris Walas. Edited by Tina Hirsch, A.C.E. Casting by Susan Arnold.

Billy ..... Zach Galligan  
 Rand Peltzer ..... Hoyt Axton  
 Kate ..... Phoebe Cates  
 Mrs. Deagle ..... Polly Holliday  
 Lynn Peltzer ..... Frances Lee McCain  
 Roy Hanson ..... Glynn Turman  
 Mr. Futterman ..... Dick Miller  
 Gerald ..... Judge Reinhold  
 Pete ..... Corey Feldman  
 Chinese Boy ..... John Louie  
 Grandfather ..... Keye Luke  
 Rockin' Ricky Rialto ..... Don Steele  
 Sherriff Frank ..... Scott Brady

by Kyle Counts

If Steven Spielberg and Joe Dante were to spend the day at the beach together, one could predict the highlight of their afternoon: Spielberg building a grandiose, multi-tiered sand castle, and Dante sneaking up from behind to level it with his bare foot. GREMLINS is Dante's cinematic equivalent of this boyish prank: a seemingly gentle, pop-eyed fantasy that abruptly turns itself inside out and becomes a ribald comic-horror story which dares to alienate its audience.

It was executive producer Spielberg, one of three, who brought the script (by 22 year-old Chris Columbus, a former student of the NYU Film School and a Marvel Comics buff) to Dante. Taken though he was with its black humor and often savage pokes at Middle America, it wasn't a project Spielberg felt he could personally undertake, yet it was a perfect opportunity to vicariously revel in the anarchy of the script's flip-flop approach—"E.T. with teeth," as it has been called.

At \$11 million—a modest sum, considering the expensive look of the film, in part due to John Hora's astute photography—GREMLINS

is Dante's biggest and most complicated movie yet, a far cry from his shoestring days at New World Pictures. Happily, having more money to spend hasn't spoiled his B-movie sensibilities; GREMLINS is playful, funny, sometimes tasteless, and delightfully schlocky—adjectives one could apply, in varying degrees to Dante's other films: HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD (co-directed with Allan Arkush), PIRANHA, THE HOWLING, and the *It's a Good Life* segment of TWILIGHT ZONE: THE MOVIE (which, with its intricate color schemes and tilted camera angles, was an exotic warm-up exercise for GREMLINS).

The movie's set-up is wonderfully bed-time story: while in Chinatown looking for a Christmas gift for his son, crackpot inventor Rand Peltzer (folksy Hoyt Axton), whose creed, "making the illogical logical" and "fantastic ideas for a fantastic world" could have been penned by Spielberg himself, meets an Asian boy (wearing a baseball cap like Short Round in INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM—the first of the film's plethora of in-jokes?) who leads him to his grandfather's (Keye Luke) novelty shop. Axton goes home with a creature Luke calls a "Mogwai," which comes complete with a manufacturer's warning: don't subject "him" to bright light, don't let him get wet, and, most importantly, never feed him after midnight. (Underlying message to the kiddies: lights out at 9:30, no bed wetting, and stay away from those cavity promoting midnight snacks.)

Back in the town square of Kingston Falls U.S.A. (nowhere in particular, and anywhere in general), a handsomely artificial-looking set by production designer James Spencer that fondly recalls IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE, Billy Peltzer (appealing newcomer Zach Galligan) is running late for his job at the bank. Billy, we learn, is partially supporting his



Gizmo makes himself a present to Zach Galligan as mom (Frances Lee McCain) and dad (Hoyt Axton) look on. Dante turns all the sweetness head over heels.

mother (Frances Lee McCain) in a quiet but impressive performance) because dad's screwball inventions aren't exactly bringing home the bacon, and the town's wealthy matriarch, Mrs. Deagle (Polly Holliday, doing an overly broad Margaret Hamilton-Lionel Barrymore riff) is threatening to call due the mortgage on the house.

Dad finally returns to the fold with Billy's present: a little furball he has nicknamed "Gizmo," a cross between a cutesy stuffed animal, Garfield the Cat, and, judging by the a-w-ahs that immediately spring forth from the audience, everybody's favorite pet dog. Aided by his "creature crew", Chris Walas, who worked on DRAGONSLAYER, has done a tremendous design job with both the cute and the nasty forms of the gremlins. The cable-controlled puppets have an astonishing variety of movements and facial mannerisms, and nine performers contributed to the clever vocal effects, including comic Howie Mandel of TV's *St. Elsewhere* and Michael Winslow from POLICE ACADEMY.

The trouble begins when Billy's pal, Pete, Corey Feldman of FRIDAY THE 13TH PART 4 (who shares an extremely realistic moment with Gizmo when he teaches him how to imitate an eye blink, as if he were

dealing with a new-born baby), spills water on Giz, causing small "pods" to form along his back that produce "tribbles" which quickly mature into more gremlins. Only these aren't cut from the same cuddly mold as Gizmo: they rip open the family Christmas presents, noisily play with Billy's toys (if he seems too old for this stuff, keep in mind that he was a 13 year-old in the original script) and one of the bunch, Stripe—the Mr. T of the second batch—spits a stream of yellow goo on the living room carpet as a cocky display of his leadership prowess.

The movie kicks into high gear when Billy mistakenly feeds the gremlins after midnight (they've purposely gnawed through the cord of the bedroom clock, stopping it at 11:30). In a manner befitting ALIEN, they metamorphose into scaly, parasitical devils of destruction, doing battle with Mom McCain in her sacred territory, the kitchen (a knock-down, gross-out scene that finds the gremlins victimized by a blender and micro wave oven—reminiscent of the *dead baby* jokes of our misspent youth), taking over a tavern where love-interest Phoebe Cates works (a non-stop gag showcase with the gremlins boozing, brawling, playing poker and yes, even break dancing), and filling up the town movie house for a private screening of SNOW WHITE. I'm sure I'm not the only one wondering how Spielberg and company got Disney to participate with a movie as far left-field as GREMLINS.

As broad and comic book in flavor as GREMLINS is, it has nonetheless elicited cries of excessive violence from some critics and parents. While some of the violence was disturbing to me as well—I was particularly bothered by an unnecessary cut-back to a group of gremlins trapped in the burning theatre—I had to remind myself that one of Dante's admirable qualities is his disregard for conventional notions of "good taste" and "acceptable" levels of violence. Considering that even Donald Duck car-

continued on page 56

## Road Dahl, Walt Disney, and the origin of the GREMLINS

When Mr. Futterman (Dick Miller) mutters under his breath about Gremlins sabotaging the war effort during WWII, GREMLINS points rather obliquely to its inspiration. *The Gremlins* is a children's book by fantasy author Roald Dahl published during the war, about creatures that bedeviled R.A.F. fighter pilots. Dahl is the former husband of Patricia Neal, who hosted the fantasy TV series WAY OUT in the early '60's. Dahl claims to have coined the name "Gremlins." The film rights to Dahl's story were opted by Walt Disney in the



A Disney studio artist's concept of a gremlin, the pesky mischief-makers created by fantasy author Roald Dahl.

early forties as the subject of a full length animated film. Dahl, then only 26, spent three weeks with Disney and his artists at the Burbank studio roughing out the storyline for the film, which was never made. Disney's illustrations were used when the story was first published in the December 1942 issue of *Cosmopolitan*, announcing the forthcoming film. The studio today owns no rights in the property.

Dahl's Gremlins did make a film appearance (uncredited) in the 1943 Bugs Bunny cartoon "Falling Hare," supervised by Bob Clampett.

*In condensing, filmmakers oversimplify and jumble book's themes*

## THE NEVERENDING STORY

A Warner Bros. and Producers Sales Organization release, 7 81. 94 mins. Directed by Wolfgang Petersen. Produced by Bernd Eichinger and Dieter Geissler. Screenplay by Wolfgang Petersen and Herman Weigel. Music composed by Klaus Doldinger and Giorgio Moroder. Co-producer, Gunther Rohgach. Associate producer, Klaus Kahler. Executive producers, Mark Damon and John Hyde.

Bastian	Barret Oliver
Bastian's father	Gerald Mc Raney
1st Bully	Drum Garrett
2nd Bully	Darryl Cooksey
3rd Bully	Nicholas Gilbert
Koreander	Thomas Hill
Tenny Weeny	Deep Roy
Night Hob	Tilo Pruckner
Cairon	Moses Gunn
Atreyu	Noah Hathaway

by Allen Malmquist

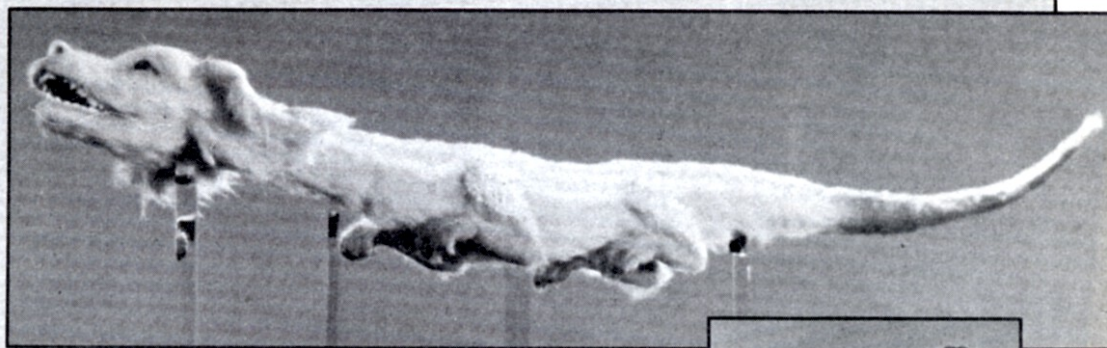
In this German-made, German-originated, American-oriented fantasy, Wolfgang Petersen, the director of *DAS BOOT*, falls prey to a common malady of modern *cinefantastique*: *THE NEVERENDING STORY* never begins. A world comes to life, a rich believable society existing on its own terms, but as in *BLADERUNNER*, as in *THE DARK CRYSTAL*, nothing of interest happens here.

The "here" constitutes the whole. Or at least the best part. The place pulls you in: Bastian, cutting math class, begins to read *The Neverending Story*; under his words we are transported into a lush forest by a speedily moving camera brushing dark branches aside, into a decidedly terran landscape which nevertheless seems the place of which fairy tales are made.

But Fantasia's animation comes primarily from its inhabitants, *DARK CRYSTAL*-like combinations of puppetry and animatronics, here with a more humorous *Alice in Wonderland* style, from the pudgy-faced racing snail to the Thog-like rock biter. Unfortunately, this latter giant, and a knee-high gnome—an example of Fantasia's human-like denizens—along with the film's other flying creatures, often have to fight against an unconvincing composite shot and their own unconvincing motion.

These technical flaws could be overlooked if only the focus was not upon visualization. But it is; the personalities hinted at within go unexplored. Falkor, the luck dragon, for instance; our humanoid hero, Atreyu, the only person who can stop the "Nothing" from devouring Fantasia, faces defeat—but suddenly, out of nowhere, this smiling, mutt-faced creature swoops down and rescues

continued on page 60



## Stop-motion animator Stephen Archer on THE NEVERENDING STORY

By Alan Jones

Novelist Michael Ende had his name taken off the credits of the film adaptation of his best-selling book. German critics didn't like it when it opened on their shores last April. And devotee's of Ende's tome tend to hate it. Nevertheless, *THE NEVERENDING STORY* is shaping up to be one of the biggest grossers ever for the Munich-based Neue Constantin Film, which backed the production to the tune of \$27 million, making it the most expensive production ever mounted in Europe.

As a film of such mammoth scale had never been attempted before in Germany, Neue Constantin producers Dieter Geissler and Bernd Eichinger found they had to go outside their indigenous circle and draw on the wealth of special effects expertise found in British craftsmen well versed in this field. First to join the team was visual effects supervisor Brian Johnson, followed by special effects make-up man Colin Arthur, who made-up the live action Calibos in *CLASH OF THE TITANS*.

When Johnson realized the script called for a lot of stop-motion animation, he hired Stephen Archer, who apprenticed with Ray Harryhausen on *CLASH OF THE TITANS* and animated the crystal spider in *KRULL*. The animator has also been

approached by Charles Schneer to work on *FORCE OF THE TROJANS*, based on the story of Helen of Troy, to assist Ray Harryhausen again. Archer was also being considered for work on *SANTA CLAUS and LEGEND*, though animation work has been eliminated from the latter.

Archer found that his work on *THE NEVERENDING STORY* hardly stretched his capabilities at all. After returning from the German premiere of *THE NEVERENDING STORY*, Archer outlined the reasons the production failed to tap the full potential of stop motion.

"When I received a phone call from Brian Johnson to discuss the film, he told me there were three characters that would have to be animated. One was a giant spider formed out of a swarm of hornets. Another was a racing snail, and the last was a flying dragon. Over a period of a few months, the producers began to change their minds about the spider sequence, and it was eventually cut. The snail was eventually done utilizing a full-sized mechanical creature. That left just the dragon and most of that was accomplished with a 45 ft. long cable operated model.

"The production was originally planned as two films, with a different director and different designs. When Wolfgang Peterson was brought in



"Pink Pluto," the go-motion puppet of Falkor, the Luck Dragon. Inset: The computerized go-motion rig used for filming by Stephen Archer. Below: Archer with the small dragon model.



to direct, he changed a lot. Most of the pre-production money was wasted. When you see the film, and you know how much it cost, you wonder where all the money went.

"One thing Brian made very clear was that he wanted to take the ILM approach to the stop-motion and use Go-motion. I was all for it as it is a relatively easy process. It is just a matter of recording the animation movements by computer so you can play it back and modify it. It is a very good system for close to camera shots where you would normally notice strobing. But since everything I ended up doing was mostly in long shot, I felt it was an elaborate, expensive technique to use for very little difference in the end result. The Go-motion rig itself had eight axes, including up, down, left, right, backwards, and forwards.

"I used two models for the dragon. The smallest was 1½ feet long supported by one rod and filmed against a blue screen. I used that for most shots. The other was 3 feet in length and supported by four rods. We dubbed this model the Pink Pluto. We had to wait such a long time for the larger dragon to be built, and for the engineers to finish the

continued on page 61

Noah Hathaway as Atreyu, astride the full scale mechanical dragon used for most sequences. The stage-bound model had a very small range of movement.



## Director Ivan Reitman—"he ain't afraid of no ghosts"

### GHOSTBUSTERS

A Columbia Pictures release. 6/1984. 107 mins. Produced and directed by Ivan Reitman. Written by Dan Aykroyd and Harold Ramis. Music by Elmer Bernstein. Production designer, John De Cuir. Director of photography, Laszlo Kovacs, A.S.C. Visual Effects by Richard Edlund, A.S.C. Executive producer, Bernie Brillstein. Film edited by Sheldon Kahn and David Blewitt, A.C.E. "Ghostbusters" written and performed by Ray Parker, Jr. Associate producers Joe Medjuck and Michael C. Gross.

Dr. Peter Venkman ..... Bill Murray  
 Dr. Raymond Stantz ..... Dan Aykroyd  
 Dana Barrett ..... Sigourney Weaver  
 Dr. Egon Spengler ..... Harold Ramis  
 Louis Tully ..... Rick Moranis  
 Janine Melnitz ..... Annie Potts  
 Walter Peck ..... William Atherton  
 Winston Zeddemore ..... Eric Hudson  
 Mayor ..... David Margulies  
 Male Student ..... Steven Tash  
 Female Student ..... Jennifer Runyon  
 Gozer ..... Slavitta Jovan

by David J. Hogan

Early in GHOSTBUSTERS, college parapsychologist Dr. Peter Venkman (Bill Murray) warns an interloper, "Back off, man. I'm a scientist." Ah, but not merely a bland, real-world scientist, but a movie scientist, spiritual kin to Baron Frankenstein and the guy who owned Donovan's brain. Venkman is a scientist with a special flair—that's why he squanders foundation money on pointless ESP research, torments a male test volunteer with electrical shocks, and flirts with a lovely female subject.

Of course, movie scientists are usually misunderstood, so it's no surprise when Venkman, Stantz (Dan Aykroyd), and Spengler (Harold Ramis) are stripped of their grant and thrown off campus into what Stantz bleakly refers to as "the private sector." But this isn't just America—it's movie America, so what else would three parapsychologists do but go into business as "professional paranormal investigators and eliminators?"

In a wacky New York City that is



Ghostbusters Bill Murray (left) and Dan Aykroyd make a house call at a posh New York hotel. Inset: One of the hotel ghosts, the blobby green weenie-eater, one of the few optical effects in the film played strictly for laughs. Makeup artist Steve Johnson sculpted the prototypes of the cable-activated suits worn by Mark Wilson, with his legs draped in black.



hilariously delineated by scripters Aykroyd and Ramis, and director Ivan Reitman, ghosts are a given. Spooks and the gooey ectoplasm they leave behind are facts of life, like cockroaches and athlete's foot. Look: they're real, okay? New York needs the Ghostbusters.

With their para-military coveralls, high-tech spook sniffers, and raspitting "unlicensed nuclear accelerators" strapped to their backs, the Ghostbusters are to stealth what The Three Stooges are to etiquette. "I think we'd better split up," Spengler suggests as the trio creeps through a haunted hotel. "Yeah," nods Venkman, "we can do more damage that way."

After dispatching an amusing assortment of unruly spirits (everyone's favorite will be the blobby green weenie-eater), the Ghostbusters investigate Dana Barrett's refrigerator, the apparent home of a pair of very nasty demons named Zuul and Gozer. Dana (Sigourney Weaver) is a symphony musician who wants the smitten Venkman out of her face

nearly as much as she wants the ghosts out of her refrigerator. The showdown between our heroes and the demons is protracted, frantic, noisy, and as deftly funny as anything that has been on screen for several years. GHOSTBUSTERS glories in the kind of expensive, big-scale mayhem that pictures like THE GREAT RACE and 1941 only aspire to.

Producer/director Ivan Reitman may be the surprise story of the season. He emerges as a confident, sure-footed director: his style is big and brassy, stuffed with closeups and vulgar charm. The absurd is cleverly balanced with the horrible. One scene, for instance, Dana Barrett's unexpected ride in her living room chair, is as slick and enervating as anything that has been done by Steven Spielberg.

The film doesn't just move, but leaps from here to there in single bounds, progressing briskly until the elements of the climax begin to fall into place. Then, oddly, Reitman slows things down. Some ruthless

continued on page 56

A live-action terror-dog bounds into Sigourney Weaver's apartment (left). Animator Randy Cook is shown (right) sculpting the stop-motion terror dogs that were used for sequences requiring broader, more realistic movement than the stage-bound dogs.



## Effects vehicle is just another bland STAR WARS rehash

### THE LAST STARFIGHTER

A Universal release. 7/84. 100 mins. In color. Director, Nick Castle. Producers, Gary Adelson & Edward O. Denault. Written by Jonathan Betuel. Director of photography, King Baggot. Art director, James D. Bissell. Production designer, Ron Cobb. Editor, C. Timothy O'Meara, A.C.E.

Alex Rogan ..... Lance Guest  
 Grig ..... Dan O'Herlihy  
 Maggie Gordon ..... Catherine Mary Stewart  
 Jane Rogan ..... Barbara Bosson  
 Nur ..... Norman Snow  
 Centauri ..... Robert Preston  
 Enduran ..... Kay E. Kuter  
 Lord Kril ..... Dan Mason  
 Louis Rogan ..... Chris Hebert

by Michael Mayo

Robert Preston is a consummate actor and superb ham who, along with Dan O'Herlihy, can wrap his lips around any bit of dialogue, no matter how leaden, and stroke it into a silky stream of entertaining malarkey. Few actors have taken so well to outrageousness as Preston and finetuned it to such a sly pitch that he usually winds up upstaging everything else around him. He certainly does so in THE LAST STARFIGHTER, and while Preston is on screen, he does a great deal towards charming the viewer into feeling that the film is much better than it actually is.

Preston's part, written with deliberate overtones of his famous persona from THE MUSICMAN, is that of an alien con man named Centauri who is supposed to be finding new starfighter pilots to be thrown up against a bunch of gravelly-voiced, sour-tempered aliens trying to punch their way into friendly space. The bounty-seeking Preston is much too wry to appeal to patriotism. Even though he's not supposed to recruit from Earth, he's blanketed the planet with video games that replicate a starfighter's controls and has been waiting for some itchy-fingered video jock to run up the score that would show he's hot stuff.

Up to this point, THE LAST STARFIGHTER's premise sounds like a Mad magazine satire on science fiction and 2001 (up goes the bone, down comes Pac-man). It could have become a wickedly good chance to send up the whole STAR WARS genre. Perhaps it's a sign of how unimaginative the film is at heart (aside from its special effects) when Preston doesn't find one of the more weird (and more likely) denizens that a drag of any video parlor might make, but bland and boring Lance Guest as the hero. Guest, by his very presence, shows quickly that the film is never going to rise above its ambition of

continued on page 59

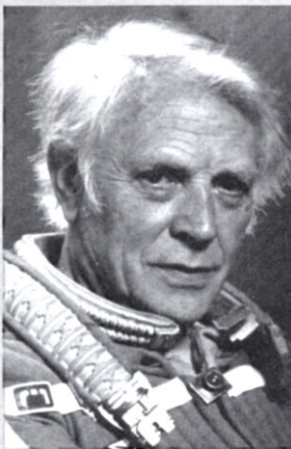
## Makeup artist Terry Smith on THE LAST STARFIGHTER

THE LAST STARFIGHTER is makeup artist Terry Smith's first major credit, but one that bodes well for his career. "After 15 years in the business, I'm an overnight success," he jokes. Not one to hog the spotlight, Smith gives ample credit for his make-ups' effectiveness to Ron Cobb's designs, Nick Castle's establishment of a family feeling on the film, the actors, and his hard-working co-workers who "busted their butts" to get the job done.

"I was very lucky to be asked to do THE LAST STARFIGHTER," said Smith. "I had been with Lorimar for 5 years, and my boss at the time, a gentleman named Don Schoenfeld, knew my background with prosthetics and make-up. When THE LAST STARFIGHTER came up, he said, 'Why don't we sit down and talk. I'd like to give you first crack at it.'"

Smith was given only a month to prepare. He worked in the MGM area called "the snake pit" where he would sculpt and paint. Smith and a team of make-up artists including Werner Keppler, David Quaschnick, Rick Stratton, Jeff Kennemore, and Lance Anderson, worked almost around the clock for five months to prepare the make-up for shooting. Dick Smith from New York, was called in for about a week to advise

**Greg Cannon's test makeup for Al Berry, tortured as a Rylosian spy. The makeup was never filmed.**



Smith credits the success of the simple one-piece rubber mask used for Grigg (right) to the talent of actor Dan O'Herlihy (unmasked, top).

on the use of make-up adhesives.

Smith would have preferred to have done more articulated and elaborate make-ups for THE LAST STARFIGHTER, but there wasn't time. Make-up artist Greg Cannon, was recommended by Dick Smith to provide some particularly dramatic effects (a thermal meltdown was suggested by Cannon of actor Al Berry's head in his death scene). Because of insufficient time and funds, the idea had to be abandoned.

Smith worked wonders, however, with the simple make-up techniques the budget allowed. His one-piece rubber mask for Grigg is an example, though Smith credits a large part of its success to the acting of Dan O'Herlihy. "His personality really came through," said Smith. "O'Herlihy is a bit of a ham, and that quality made it work."

Smith's mask was flexible enough to pull down over O'Herlihy's head without being slit at the back, just like the masks you can buy at any novelty store, then glued down and blended around the eyes and mouth. "I pushed the rubber to its limit and it came through," said Smith.

While Grig's make-up was almost identical to Ron Cobb's designs, the designs for the Rylosians originally had nostrils that went up the sides of their noses, but this idea had to be dropped when all the actors cast as Rylosians had broad noses rather than small, thin ones. Robert Preston's alien make-up was not designed with him in mind. While a stunt double was originally to have done the part, Preston insisted on wearing the appliance himself.

For large crowd scenes involving aliens, ten to twelve make-up artists would have to coordinate their work



with six to eight hair stylists. Work would begin at 5:30 in the morning and would go until six or seven at night. (Appliance manufacturing often took until 11 p.m.) The shoot itself lasted only 43 days, which is quite unusual for a major studio feature, let alone one that required elaborate make-up and special effects.

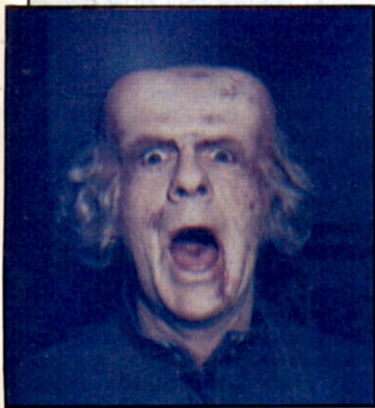
Terry Smith first became interested in make-up after visiting John Chambers on the set of PLANET OF THE APES. He credits Chambers with giving him the inspiration and instruction required for this difficult and highly competitive field. Smith

worked under Joe Blasco on Cronenberg's THEY CAME FROM WITHIN, which is believed the first use of air bladders in make-up.

"Actually, we didn't use air bladders," said Smith. "We used prophylactics, a cheaper and easier way to achieve the same results."

Smith gained experience doing lab work, prosthetics, and medical appliances. He created a double for Clyde, the orangutan in EVERY WHICH WAY BUT LOOSE, and an alien for THE GREATEST AMERICAN HERO, and also worked on V: THE FINAL BATTLE.

Terry Smith applies makeup to Robert Preston as alien con-man Centauri.



Never once matches the incendiary inventiveness of CARRIE

FIRESTARTER

A Universal release, 5-84, 115 mins. In color. Director, Mark L. Lester. Producer, Frank Capra, Jr. Screenplay by Stanley Mann. Based on the novel *Firestarter* by Stephen King.

Andrew McGee ..... David Keith  
 Charlie McGee ..... Drew Barrymore  
 Dr. Joseph Wanless ..... Freddie Jones  
 Vicky McGee ..... Heather Locklear  
 Captain Hollister ..... Martin Sheen  
 John Rainbird ..... George C. Scott  
 Irv Manders ..... Art Carney  
 Norma Manders ..... Louise Fletcher  
 Dr. Pynchot ..... Moses Gunn  
 Taxi Driver ..... Antonio Fargas

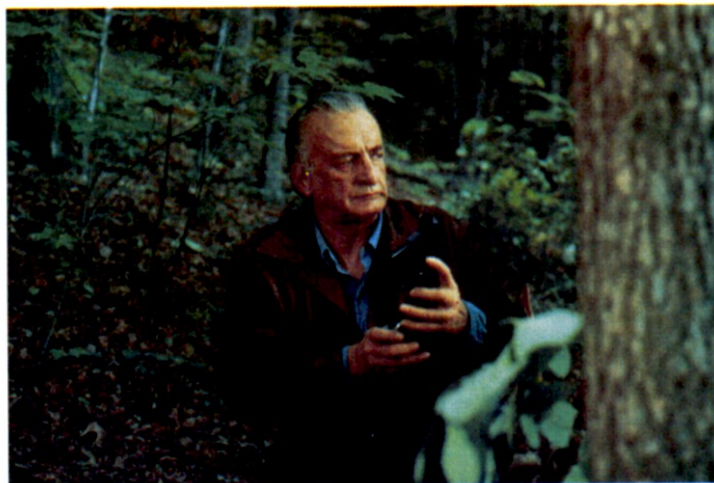
by Steve Dimeo

Getting a girl hot takes on a whole new meaning in this eighth movie adaptation of a Stephen King work, this time directed by relative newcomer Mark (CLASS OF '84) Lester. No matter how much Drew (E.T.) Barrymore screws up her face to carry the torch for this thinly conceived tale of an eight-year old pyrokinetic *femme fatale*, though, the film—which does manage to consolidate many of King's characters and situations—never warms above the staleness of microwaved leftovers. The surprising thing is that the film actually improves the visual, dramatic potential of King's novel. But, fanned by the flames of remarkably strained acting, this uninvolved, unbelievable, unimaginative special effects exercise only snuffs out the hope that King's bestselling material might somehow elevate the substance of horror films.

In adapting the windy 400-page novel, screenwriter Stanley (EYE OF THE NEEDLE) Mann stays fairly close to the novel in the beginning and when he later tries to consolidate characters, he focuses more on the villains than he does on the characters we should care about. Like King, Mann jumps back and forth between the flight in the present to the experiment conducted by Dr. Wanless (Freddie Jones) in the past.

To minimize any confusion over who's really in charge of The Shop, Mann also gives director Capt. Hollister (Martin Sheen) the job of handling the experiments with Charlie after she's been apprehended and makes him alone the victim of the father's renewed powers once Andy shakes The Shop's drugs. That helps, but not much. The novel needlessly muddles the plot by having Andy first experiment on a closet transvestite, Dr. Herman Pynchot, who's directed to commit suicide by plunging his arm down a garbage disposal—something, obviously, that would have been a bit of a distraction in the film. At the climax in the stables, Mann shrewdly has Andy order Hollister to shoot the *real* villain hiding out in the loft—a much more credible way of integrating the two villains into the scene.

Similarly, Mann has the mysteriously transcendental Indian hit man John Rainbird (George C. Scott)



George C. Scott as the mysteriously transcendental Indian hit man John Rainbird.

involved in many more of the activities done by other agents in the novel. Scott's make-up is also more wisely toned down from the one-eyed "balrog" of the novel—with the idea, apparently, of making the nut that he is somewhat more sympathetic. When Andy mails off letters to newspapers calling for help, it is Rainbird who intercepts the letters and throttles the postman; in the book the postman is harmlessly robbed by two other agents. Later at Tashmore Pond, Rainbird alone—and much more tersely than in the novel—fires the ampules of Orasin into Charlie and her father. We even have a brief scene where Rainbird chops the bridge of some stranger's nose in the dark, killing him instantly—though we never know anything about that particular "hit". Clearly this guy is someone we wouldn't exactly invite to dinner.

The problem is that, even after focusing on a villain and his villainy, we never really understand Rainbird's almost sexual obsession to do in Charlie personally when The Shop is through with her. At one point he simply says trance-like to Sheen's character, "We will be very close"—close, he adds, to what he calls "the power of the gods." In the novel his motivation has to do with wanting to know the power of death itself. Stated like this in the film, it sounds just about as silly. What we really need is something *real* behind his monomaniacal drive. All we get is his melodramatic outburst in the dark with Charlie about his incarceration by the *Kong* in Vietnam (mostly a ploy in the book, but treated at face value in the film).

The climax in the stables points up the film's most basic flaw, though: it's conceived not as a human drama but as a simple-minded special effects exhibition. Even the photography itself is incredibly dull. When Andy and Charlie are finally reunited in the stables (after almost five months in

the book though no reference is ever made to time in the film), we have to sit through the painful slow-motion of Charlie rushing towards her father—and pretend we haven't seen this kind of device millions of times before.

That episode proves amazingly devoid of any sense of suspense as well. Andy waits to tell her there that Rainbird has only meant to use her all along (the revelation in the novel comes in the message smuggled into Charlie). So why does Rainbird, this merciless mercenary, hesitate to kill this "ultimate" adversary who can singe a man's heart with a simple twitch of an eye? We never do believe this kid who likes to play with fire is ever really imperiled. There's nothing, then, even in Rainbird's inevitable defeat. It's interesting watching the bullet from his gun explode from the heat she's emanating now—and rather picturesque to see him blasted against the barn door with the force of her flames. But is there ever really anything natural about this supernatural expression of despair over her father's death?

Andy himself has to tell her (in the movie only), "This is a war, Charlie." (Could King be playing on the name "Charlie" to suggest Rainbird at last loses his long-standing war against the other "Charly" in "Nam? Naw. Not in a picture like this!) He has to tell her to kill everybody. "For you, Daddy", Charlie declares, her face stupidly superimposed over the fiery devastation of The Shop. But whatever happened to that understandable venting of anger we saw in CARRIE?

That isn't the half of it. The visualization of these powers is equally unbelievable. With so much at their disposal, effects men like Mike Wood and Jeff Jarvis merely have a whiff of air blow up under Drew's long hair, add a few beads of sweat to her forehead, then make her clench her little fists. And behold! Everywhere she

looks bursts into flames. During the climactic destruction, they have her materialize and hurl fireballs that look curiously like flaming meteors. But that's only the effects men getting *their* rocks off. Why couldn't her eyes blaze red? And if she really were capable of setting *cinder blocks* aflame, raising the temperature of a room to over 1000 degrees, wouldn't her body emit some kind of ironically halolike aura? Nothing here, though, but poor Drew putting out what little she can—while the effects team puts out our fires.

Wood and Jarvis don't seem to know what to do about visualizing Andy's talents either. In the book all we see are the often ridiculous results of his efforts at mind-control. Here we have to suffer through David Keith clutching both sides of his head, wrinkling his brow and bleeding from his nose as he concentrates to make puppets of us all. Seeing all this on the screen makes us wonder what lingers at the back of our minds while reading the novel anyway: why does it only take concentrating *once* like that to control the victim until his plans are carried out? It begins to sound more like hypnosis than telepathy.

Finally, of course, it's this question of credibility that snuffs out the film's faint hope. We have a little bit more background on the characters in the novel. But the book as well as the movie actually cries out for dramatization of the time between the experiment and the storming of the McGee house. We have to know more about the background of the agents as well as their victims before we can even begin to believe any of this nonsense.

There's another reason why we should have more detail from that period in which Charlie's powers should develop much more slowly: the talents of newcomer Heather Locklear. She's actually the only one who shines through the dim fires of this project—and her appearance amounts to little more than a walk-on. Everyone else looks like some of Andy's lobotomized zombies. Martin Sheen is the best puppet of them all. Scott isn't far from the top as a wooden Indian with a malicious smile carved on his face. Drew Barrymore is clearly a trooper about all this, but she needs a good deal more seasoning to be a lead.

The strength of this film is in the strength of the novel: the spark of a unique idea about a girl who can start fires with her mind. But neither bears out the promise. Void of developing characters or believability, this film never once matches the incendiary inventiveness of CARRIE (1976), the terrifying last half of CU'JO (1983), or the solid, if episodic, characterizations in THE DEAD ZONE (1983). More down-to-earth arsonists would do well to start with FIRESTARTER. □



# FILM RATINGS

## THE ADVENTURES OF BUCKAROO BANZAI

Directed by W. D. Richter. 20th Century Fox, 8/84, 103 mins. With Peter Weller, John Lithgow, Ellen Barkin, Jeff Goldblum.

Too-hip science fiction satire that drowns in its cutesy pretensions. Is it space bop or earth kitsch? Chic or kooky? The picture's intentions go all over the map. Good faces, good effects, nice design, and some cute moments cannot hide the fact that the film is telling a very flimsy story. There's lots of arrogant charm here, but no substance. ●● DJH

## C.H.U.D.

Directed by Douglas Cheek. New World, 8/84, 87 mins. With: Daniel Stern, John Heard, Christopher Curry, Jay Thomas.

Never mind what the title stands for; you'll hear the explanation a couple of times throughout the film and each time it sounds less plausible. Homeless people living in sewers and tunnels beneath New York are mutated into cannibalistic monsters when they come into contact with nuclear waste. It takes an hour to reveal this and show a glimpse of the first monster, which resembles New World's SCREAMERS creatures with lightbulbs for eyes (makeup by John Caglione, Jr., automated—a la Rob Bottin—by Kevin Haney).

Since so little time is devoted to the monsters, you are supposed to get caught up with the people, but they are so oddball (Stern), remote (Heard), or unlikeable (Curry), all you care about is the next glimpse of scar tissue makeup by Ed French. Producer Andrew Bonime tried to get this film made for 4 years. Be careful what you wish for, Andrew, you sometimes get it. ● JPH

## CONAN THE DESTROYER

Directed by Richard Fleischer. Universal, 7/84, 101 mins. With: Arnold Schwarzenegger, Grace Jones, Tracey Walter, Sarah Douglas.

With excellent photography by Jack Cardiff and eye-catching costumes by John Bloomfield, this is possibly the best-looking Sword & Sorcery film ever made—too bad that it's also one of the dumbest. Only Grace Jones shines in the cast. The two monster wizards in the film equal Toho's typical efforts and fall far below expectations. The film does have a few good laughs, mostly at its own expense. ● DKF

## ELECTRIC DREAMS

Directed by Steve Barron. MGM-UA, 7/84, 95 mins. With: Lenny Von Dohlen, Virginia Madsen, Bud Cort.

A self-described fable which makes one overlook its implausibility and frequent use of clichés. Somehow it manages to be a funny and charming story of an architect nerd who overloads his computer's memory and spills champagne on the keyboard only to have the computer magically develop a personality. The nerd uses the computer to write a love

	●●●●	●●●	●●	●	○			
	MUST SEE	EXCELLENT	GOOD	MEDIOCRE	WORTHLESS			
FILM TITLE	FSC	DJH	JPH	DKF	BK	MM	DS	
<b>THE ADVENTURES OF BUCKAROO BANZAI</b> / W. D. Richter, Fox, 8/84, 103 mins.	●	●●		●	●	●●●●	●●	
<b>C.H.U.D.</b> / Douglas Cheek, New World, 7/84, 110 mins.		●	●		●	○	●●	
<b>CLOAK AND DAGGER</b> / Richard Franklin, Universal, 8/84, 101 mins.	●●●		●●●●	●●	●	●●	●●	
<b>CONAN THE DESTROYER</b> / Richard Fleischer, Universal, 6/84, 103 mins.	●	●	●●	●	○	●	●●●	
<b>DREAMSCAPE</b> / Joe Ruben, Fox, 8/84, 98 mins.	●●●	●●●	●	●●●●		●●	●●●	
<b>ELECTRIC DREAMS</b> / Steve Barron, MGM-UA, 7/84, 95 mins.	●●			●●●		●	●●	
<b>FIRESTARTER</b> / Mark Lester, Universal, 5/84, 114 mins.	●	●●●	●●	●	●	●	●●	
<b>FRIDAY THE 13th-FINAL CHAPTER</b> / Joseph Zito, Paramount, 4/84, 62 mins.	○		●		●		●	
<b>GHOSTBUSTERS</b> / Ivan Reitman, Columbia, 5/84, 107 mins.	●●	●●●●	●●●	●●●	●●	●●●●	●●●	
<b>GREMLINS</b> / Joe Dante, Warner Bros., 5/84, 111 mins.	●●	●●●●	●●●	●●●	●●	●●	●●●	
<b>GREYSTOKE</b> / Hugh Hudson, Warner Bros., 3/84, 129 mins.	●	●●●	●	●●●	●●●	○	●●	
<b>ICE PIRATES</b> / Stewart Raffill, MGM-UA, 3/84, 100 mins.	●●	●●	○	●	○	●		
<b>ICEMAN</b> / Fred Schepisi, Universal, 4/84, 101 mins.	●●	●●●	○	●●●		○	●	
<b>INDIANA JONES &amp; TEMPLE OF DOOM</b> / Steven Spielberg, Paramount, 5/84, 117 mins.	●●	●	●●	●●	●●	●	●●●	
<b>THE LAST STARFIGHTER</b> / Nick Castle, Universal, 7/84, 120 mins.	●●	●●	●●●●	●●	●	●●●●	●●●	
<b>METROPOLIS</b> / Fritz Lang (1926) re-release, Giorgio Moroder 8/84.			○		●●	●●●	●●	
<b>MUPPETS TAKE MANHATTAN</b> / Frank Oz, Tri-Star, 6/84, 94 mins.	●●	●●●	●●●			●●	●	
<b>THE NEVERENDING STORY</b> / Wolfgang Petersen, Warner Bros., 7/84, 94 mins.	●●	●●	●●●	●	●	●●	●●	
<b>THE PHILADELPHIA EXPERIMENT</b> / Stewart Raffill, New World, 7/84, 102 mins.	●●	●●●		●●	●	●●	●●	
<b>RED DAWN</b> / John Milius, MGM-UA, 8/84, 114 mins.	●●	●●●		●	●●	●●	●●●	
<b>SHEENA</b> / John Guillermin, Columbia, 8/84, 117 mins.	○				●	○	●●	
<b>SPLASH</b> / Ron Howard, Buena Vista, 3/84, 111 mins.	●●●●	●●●●	●	●●	●●	●●●●	●●●	
<b>STAR TREK III</b> / Leonard Nimoy, Paramount, 5/84, 105 mins.	●●	●●	●●●	●●	●	●	●●●	
<b>STREETS OF FIRE</b> / Walter Hill, Universal, 5/84, 94 mins.	●●	●●		●	●	●●	●●	
<b>TOP SECRET</b> / Jim Abrams, David Zucker, & Jeremy Zucker, Paramount, 5/84, 90 mins.	●		●●	●●	●●	●●	●●	
<b>V: THE FINAL BATTLE</b> / Richard T. Heffron, NBC-TV, 5/84, 300 mins.	●●	●●	○	●	●	○	●●	

FSC/Frederick S. Clarke DJH/David J. Hogan JPH/Judith P. Harris DKF/Dennis K. Fischer BK/Bill Kelley MM/Mike Mayo DS/Dan Scapperotti

song to win the gorgeous girl's heart, but the computer becomes an electronic Cyrano and gets both jealous and vengeful. Cute and cloving. ●●● DKF

## THE FOURTH MAN

Directed by Paul Verhoeven. Spectrafilm, 6/84, 101 mins. With: Jerroin Krabbe, Renee Soutendijk, Thom Hoffman.

A Dutch DON'T LOOK NOW where the central character (Krabbe) has a series of visions he can't interpret. The visions involve a seductive woman (Soutendijk) whose 3 husbands have all died in strange accidents. Krabbe eventually comes to suspect he may be the fourth man to die by her witchery.

The visions themselves are interesting and fairly easy for the audience to fathom; there is some gore make-up by Chris Tucker (ELEPHANT MAN), including an obvious fake head whose eye is poked out. The ending is ambiguous. ●● JPH

## FRANKENSTEIN

Directed by James Ormrod. Showtime, 6/84, 62 mins. With: Robert Powell, Carrie Fisher, David Warner, John Gielgud.

Based on the recent (unsuccessful) Broadway production, this cable-TV version is far inferior, lacking the wonderful stage effects of Bran Ferren. Taped and transferred to film, vehicle wastes

the considerable talents of David Warner as the creature, in obvious burn make-up by Mary Griffiths. Made on location at a castle in Yorkshire, the photography is uniformly dark and ugly, making little use of the gorgeous scenery. When you consider the dynamism of Hammer's 1957 film, you wonder how anyone could make the same story so dull. ○ JPH

## HOUSE OF LONG SHADOWS

Directed by Peter Walker. MGM-UA, 9/84, 102 mins. With: Desi Arnaz Jr., Peter Cushing, Vincent Price, Christopher Lee, John Carradine.

A modern update of that old chestnut, "Seven Keys to Bald-

pate." Arnaz is a writer who holes up in an old house to win a bet: can he write a thriller in 24 hours? Instead he becomes embroiled in a revenge plot involving an escaped murderer who's been walled up 40 years. The beginning is dreadfully slow, with Arnaz giving his usual mannered performance. Once the old horror hands come on—Cushing, Price, Lee, and Carradine—things pick up. There are two nice twist endings, but the whole effort is just hohum. ○ JPH

## INVITATION TO HELL

Directed by Wes Craven. ABC-TV, 5/84, 100 mins. With: Robert Urich, Susan Lucci, Joanna Cassidy.

This for-the-money Craven mishmash is proof positive the TV movie is rarely a director's forum. Urich, seduced by satanic villainess Lucci, stoically carries the three stock expressions of B movie heroes (courage, terror, revulsion), while the plot unravels with depressing boredom. ○BK

## MEATBALLS II

Directed by Ken Wiederhorn. Tri-Star, 8/84, 89 mins. With: Richard Mulligan, John Mengatti, Kim Richards.

Bill Murray salvaged the first one; replacing him with Richard Mulligan (SOAP) and John Larraquette (NIGHT COURT) but keeping the same bad writing, and adding a pathetic interstellar camper just doesn't cut the mustard. ○ Allen Malmquist

## METROPOLIS

Directed by Fritz Lang (1926, Germany). Giorgio Moroder, 8/84, 82 mins. With: Rudolf Klein, Alfred Abel, Gustav Frolich, Brigitte Helm.

Giorgio Moroder's contemporary reconstruction embellishes the genius of Fritz Lang's brilliant film of class struggle and rebellion with a few restored sequences, dramatically effective color tinting and sound effects, plus a driving rock & roll score that speaks for the silent characters on screen. The toe-tapping rhythm of the music (the seeming antithesis of dramatic film music) gives the film the energy of an extended music video, a style which uniquely seems to fit the impressionistic imagery. Moroder makes the film accessible to contemporary audiences otherwise unable to relate to Lang's visionary masterpiece. ●●● Randall D. Larson

If you never saw the film and are curious, by all means go. If you saw it and never liked it, this isn't going to help. ○ JPH

## THE MUPPETS TAKE MANHATTAN

Directed by Frank Oz. Tri-Star, 7/84, 91 mins. With: Jim Henson, Frank Oz, Dave Goetz, Dabney Coleman, Joan Rivers.

Tired Broadway story given new life by the irrepressible, irreverent Muppets. The film bounces and slips from one moment of delight to the next. Kermit's impersonation of a Hollywood agent is sidesplitting, and Miss continued on page 51

## BABY

continued from page 23

word for Norton personally with Disney head Richard Berger, a call which eventually helped Norton clinch the assignment.

Production on the film began last November with a two-and-a-half month stay in Africa's Ivory Coast. The New Mexico-sized state on the underside of the western bulge of the continent has only been seen in one other film, *BLACK AND WHITE IN COLOR* in 1977. Shooting at the location required building an eight mile trail, placating a group of natives so they could work at their "sacred" lake, working in hundred-plus degree temperatures and humidity just this side of rain, not to mention watching out for the occasional stray cobra.

The production returned to Disney's Burbank lot for a final three weeks of live action shooting with the actors and an estimated two months of effects work. Working with the effects unit as a consultant on the huge quarter scale miniature scenes is ILM's Paul Huston. Also working as a storyboarder and movement planner on the scenes is film veteran John Jensen, whose legendary visualizations include work for Hitchcock's *NORTH BY NORTHWEST* and Cecil B. DeMille's *THE TEN COMMANDMENTS*.

One break *BABY* has made with what have been traditionally the best dinosaur movies is that no stop motion animation will be utilized in the film. Instead, long-time Carlo Rambaldi associate Isidoro Raponi has designed a variety of mechanical dinosaurs that were fabricated last summer at the Disney workshops. Raponi began work on *BABY* in January 1983, answering Disney's question of "can it be done?" by making a

**Mechanical effects supervisor Isidoro Raponi works on a "saur" throat, one of the film's quarter scale Brontosaurus.**



**Academy Award-winning cinematographer John Alcott (in white) sets up a scene in the African jungle. Inset: Stars Sean Young and William Katt play a young American couple in search of Baby.**



fully articulated prototype head and neck, hand operated with cable controls similar to *ET*'s innards. Raponi based his designs on consultations with museum paleontologists but modified the designs so that the faces would have much more expressiveness than a reptilian face would normally have.

On Raponi's fully articulated models, the heads, necks, nostrils, eyes, brows, mouths, tongues, and throats all have realistic movement. Inside, the dinosaurs have an inner skeleton of aluminum and steel, through which control cables and elastic "bungee" cords have been run. Covering the skeleton are resin plastic plates, a molded layer of soft polyurethane foam to fill out the shape, and finally a covering of latex foam "skin" painted with an elastic gray paint. Almost all the movements are done with hand operated cable controls except for the large dinosaurs where a hydraulic boost system was added because of the tremendous weight.

A crew of six people, including Raponi, operated the dinosaurs' neck, face, and tail movement, while a group of actors were used inside the costumes for basic walking movements in the baby, and in quarter scale adult models. The actors inside the fifty-pound costumes were chosen from over one-hundred-fifty applicants and include two martial artists and an ex-Disneyland employee who worked inside character costumes at the amusement park.

The actors walk doubled over inside the costumes using short hand stilts. Because most of the mechanics are located on top, above the performers, the costumes were sometimes hard to keep balanced. The actors are completely sealed inside the suit. Temperatures became so stifling that performers were allowed to work only in 30-minute shifts. The actors working in the Baby suit wore thick cotton leotards soaked with water to keep cool.

Except for one special model of the dinosaur, the actors inside worked blind and had to be moved by stagehands and guided by headset-relayed instructions from Norton. The director, whose work also includes the telefilm *GARGOYLES*, made several takes of each scene, mostly working against the huge blue screen origi-

nally made for Disney's *THE BLACK HOLE*. Despite the arduous work, Raponi says that the dinosaurs have been fairly trouble free. The only significant problems were in Africa where the high humidity and salt content of the air caused more rust in the mechanisms than expected. There, the dinosaurs had to be torn apart to keep them cleaned and oiled.

Photographing *BABY* is Academy-Award winning cinematographer John Alcott, who lensed Stanley Kubrick's last four films and whose recent work on *GREYSTOKE* is being hailed as "ravishing." Alcott is a soft-spoken Englishman who shrugs off praise, saying the work on *GREYSTOKE* helped him understand what was going to be needed in filming *BABY*. "I like the idea of trying to do a human-dinosaur relationship," said Alcott. "It's never been done very well before. I had just done *GREYSTOKE* in the Camerons, so I knew what to expect."

Alcott's award-winning "look" is all the more incredible in that he rarely looks through the camera, uses smoke, or uses a light meter to set his exposures. Instead, he takes pictures of a setup with a polaroid until he feels the lighting is right, then sets the camera to that.

"I leave most of the framing of a scene to the operator and check it to see if it's what I want," he reveals. "I enjoy lighting the set more, and since time is the ultimate factor in filming I think it's better to concentrate on photographing the set."

"In the jungle, the biggest problem is the limited amount of light," Alcott continued. "It can drop off so quickly that we sometimes had to wrap as early as four in the afternoon. Because of that, I've found that the best way to get the most out of the area is to always wet down the foliage between shots so it glistens and provides more contrast."

One of those most concerned that *BABY* not become "cute" is actor William Katt. *BABY* is Katt's first motion picture since 1979's *BUICK AND SUNDANCE: THE EARLY YEARS*, and the actor who first came to prominence opposite Sissy Spacek and Amy Irving in Brian DePalma's *CARRIE* wanted to make sure that he had some input into his character.

"I thought it was the kind of script that my particular sense of humor

would lend itself to," said Katt. "I thought some of the dialog was bland and that the character really didn't have the kind of attitude I wanted, so I worked with the writers. We didn't change the structure of the film, just some of the characterization."

"I kind of got stuck in my early films with being cast as this vulnerable young man," continued Katt. "That's certainly not all of me. I made a conscious choice to change that with this film. My character is very cynical. He's impatient and anxious to be home. But underlying that is the fact he's a very strong character and has a real fondness for his girl. They start out as a young, trendy couple who are on a two-career course and they end up having this bonding experience that ties them together."

And was it difficult working with special effects? "Yes," Katt said emphatically. "You have to make sure that with every take you do what you want with the scene. The one scene that you don't have right is inevitably the one they're going to print. In other words, if the dinosaur works right, that's the take they're going to go with. You have to make sure your performance is there. Another problem is that, as an actor, you find yourself thinking not only of what you have to do to accomplish your task, but how to make this latex creation believable at the same time. It's very difficult."

Touchstone Films scrapped plans to give the film a major Christmas release. Instead Disney plans an extensive promotional campaign, equal to *SPLASH*'s five million dollar ad budget and following the same post-Christmas release pattern. The film is now set to bow February 15. Plans are in the works for several promotional tie-ins, along with a "teaser" trailer to hit theatres this fall, as well as slide and video presentations to be given at major science fiction conventions.

"I do hope that the film is something that parents and kids can both enjoy," said Katt. "Originally, the script suffered from the cutes. We all went in leery of that, but Norton has a very hard edge to his direction. He doesn't direct 'cute,' Patrick McGeehan certainly doesn't play 'cute,' and neither do Sean or I. We all played against that and did the film as an out-and-out adventure." □

## FILM RATINGS

continued from page 49

Piggy is, uh, ravishing. More colorful and more fun than a bag of candy corn. ●●● DJH

## MUTANT

Directed by John "Bud" Cardos. Film Ventures, 10/84. With: Wings Hauser, Bo Hopkins.

Yet another of those "the corporation is trying to cover up the scandal which is endangering the town" films. This time, as in last year's *THE BEING*, the villain is toxic waste which transforms people into acid-dripping zombies. The film moves well, makes some attempts at characterization, and has some nice action scenes, but it lacks the tension and relentless suspense that characterize Romero's zombie films. As to the rest, we've seen it all before—too many times. ● DKF

## NIGHT OF THE COMET

Directed by Thom Eberhardt. Atlantic Releasing, 11/84. With: Catherine Mary Stewart, Robert Beltran, Kelli Maroney, Mary Woronov.

Two teenage airheads and a truck driver are the survivors of a comet that turns people into zombies. Unbeknownst to them, a government think tank needs their blood to find a serum for themselves. Lots of red filter shots of a deserted Los Angeles do not make for an interesting apocalypse. While occasionally humorous, this low budget feature is mostly dull. ● DKF

## THE PHILADELPHIA EXPERIMENT

Directed by Stewart Raffill. New World, 8/84. 102 mins. With: Michael Pare, Nancy Allen, Bobby DiCicco.

Enjoyable time-traveler adventure, unremarkable as science fiction, but surprisingly successful as human drama. Pare (who is excellent) and Allen work well together, bringing emotional conviction to their roles. Raffill's direction is intelligent. Max Anderson's special effects range from so-so to good. ●● DJH

## QUEST

Directed by Saul and Elaine Bass. USA, 1983. 30 mins. Written by Ray Bradbury.

A visually interesting short made by "titer extraordinaire" Saul Bass and his wife. On a planet where the human life cycle lasts 8 days, a boy journeys to find the key that will end his people's wretched existence. The screenplay by Ray Bradbury is surprisingly banal. The effects, including wide angle composite shots are outstanding. The work looks as good as a multi-million dollar epic, although some of the miniatures lack sufficient detail. The boy's run toward a pyramid is set to the music of Holst's "Neptune" is cinematically thrilling. ●●● Les Paul Robley

## RED DAWN

Directed by John Milius. MGM, U.S.A., 8/84. 114 mins. With: Patrick Swayze, C. Thomas Howell, Lea Thompson, Harry Dean Stanton, Ron O'Neal.

Milius' fascistic fantasy about a group of patriotic teenagers resisting the Russian takeover of the U.S. is a completely botched job. Milius ruth-

lessly edited his movie and may have removed his best material. In any case, the film's weak story doesn't hold up. People are shot down in the streets without protest, an electronic monitoring device hangs around in one fellow's intestinal tract for months, commandos look like they just came from the barber shop, and a senseless suicide mission allows the foolish heroes to die bravely. The film is both immoral and inept. ● DKF

## UFORIA

Directed by John Binder. Universal, 7/84 (Filmex). 100 mins. With: Cindy Williams, Fred Ward, Harry Dean Stanton.

Williams is the ingenious supermarket checker who believes in salvation by UFO's; Ward is the grungy but charming drifter who aspires to singing stardom. Quirky and engaging character comedy, shot on the cheap in the California desert. Affectionate and insightful, film gently mocks human foibles as it celebrates our dreams. Final moments are an amusing spoof of *CLOSE ENCOUNTERS*. Performances uniformly wonderful. Made by producer Melvin Simon in 1981. Universal should take this one off the shelf. ●●● DJH

## COMET

continued from page 10

The film's budget is "marginally bigger" than that of *SOLE SURVIVOR* (which Eberhardt said heavily involved Master Charge). *SOLE SURVIVOR* opened and closed in only a few weeks this spring. Eberhardt contends the film was badly handled by distributor IFM, and that he, as writer-director, had to take the lion's share of the blame for its failure.

"I've yet to read a negative review of *SOLE SURVIVOR* that I don't agree with," commented Eberhardt, who candidly admitted that the horror film was never a strong effort, but at least made sense in his cut. He wrote *SOLE SURVIVOR* and *NIGHT OF THE COMET* at about the same time, and tried in vain to convince his producers that the latter was the stronger of the two properties for their feature film debut. Eberhardt described his relationship with the inexperienced producing team—former furniture manufacturers—as a "struggle from day one." By the time the film was turned over to IFM, he was long since out of the picture, unaware that the film would be re-edited, shortened by 15 minutes and stripped of its original David Anthony score. "The distributor decided they were going to sell it as a 'grab and stab' movie, which it was not," lamented Eberhardt. "It was closer to *DON'T LOOK NOW* than *HAL-LOWEEN*."

After such a frustrating experience, Eberhardt is glad to be working with producers of the caliber of Wayne Crawford and Andy Lane (*VALLEY GIRL*, *ALPHABET CITY*). And when he learned that Pia Zadora was making a film called *VOYAGE OF THE ROCK ALIENS*, he breathed an additional sigh of relief that early on he discarded *NIGHT OF THE COMET*'s original title: *TEEN-AGE COMET ZOMBIES*. □

# CFQ BOOKSHOP

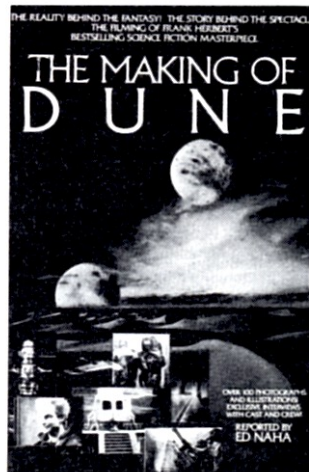
## GEORGE PAL PUPPET FILMS



## George Pal

in Holland 1934-1939

Direct from Holland! Book traces 5 missing years (1934 - 1939) in the career of one of Hollywood's most renowned producer-directors, GEORGE PAL. Famous for films like *DESTINATION MOON*, *WAR OF THE WORLDS*, and *THE TIME MACHINE*; Pal also pioneered the technique which used the principles of cartoon animation in combination with European puppet art for his famous "puppetoons." Written in Dutch with an English summary, book contains storyboards, behind the scenes photos, sketches, and frame blow-ups of Pal's animation work in Holland. Definitely a collector's item. 8 1/4 X 11 1/4, paper, \$7.00



For those of us who've thirsted for a visual journey to the Arakis of Frank Herbert's epic novel *Dune*, the wait is over. December marks the debut of David Lynch's \$40 million screen adaptation of Herbert's pulp classic. Coinciding with the film's release is Ed Naha's behind-the-scenes study of the production. Includes over 100 photographs and illustrations, and exclusive interviews with the cast and crew, explaining how the father of *ERASER-HEAD* made it all happen. Timely and fascinating. Paper, \$5.95

## New Releases From McFarland

### HORROR FILM STARS

Bela Lugosi, star of *DRACULA* and true native of Transylvania; Lon Chaney Sr., makeup master and man of 1000 faces; just two of the greats of classic horror cinema spotlighted in Michael R. Pitts' anthology. Book includes classic stills from the films that made these stars famous, biographies, filmographies, and career reviews. Also includes lesser seen but widely remembered horror players like Ray Milland and Fay Wray. 324 pages. Paper, \$12.95 or cloth, \$16.95

### IN THE NICK OF TIME

A thrill-a-minute study of the well-known cliffhanger in *Motion Picture Sound Serials*. Heart-wrenching adventures such as 1936's *FLASH GORDON*, 1944's *THE TIGER WOMAN*, and 1949's *BATMAN AND ROBIN* are examined in light of formula, directors, stars, etc. The book (which, like the cliffhangers it salutes, keeps you on the edge of your seat) also includes photos, and filmographies of serials released from 1930-1956. 281 pages. Cloth, \$19.95

ORDER TOLL FREE BY PHONE OR USE ORDER FORM PROVIDED, SEE PAGE 61



Keenan Wynn (l) and George Petrie make a deadly bargain in director John Harrison's *'I'll Give You a Million.'*

## DARKSIDE

continued from page 15

haven for low-budget productions. Rubinstein happily claims to have his studio next to Paramount. No not the studio, but the Paramount Mattress Company. The New York studio is located just across the East River in Long Island City using a building which once housed the old *Amos and Andy* television production unit.

"Filming on both coasts was basically to get the shows finished," said Rubinstein, but it offered the additional benefit of tapping the talent pools on both coasts. It gave us access without having to coordinate travel and shooting schedules on these short shoots [four days per episode]."

Most of the stories don't require the presence of name casts, but some familiar names crop up in various episodes including Stuart Whitman, Farley Granger, Danny Aiello, Peggy Cass, Tippi Hendren, and Fritz Weaver.

Since Laurel is in a transitional period, switching from making one movie at a time to a heavier production schedule, the new series offers the additional corporate benefit of functioning as a farm league for new talent. According to Vogel the farm team will, "test our relationship with new directors, which is certainly much less of a financial risk than having someone do a first feature. Although television has been much more of a producers' medium than films, our directors have gotten more latitude than most television directors, but not as much as if they were doing a feature."

Several members of the farm team came from the ranks of Romero's own unofficial stock company. Michael Gornick, the director of "Word Processor" and "Slippage," the story of a man whose identity and grip on reality begin to slip away, was director of photography on *DAWN OF THE DEAD*, *MARTIN*, *CREEPSHOW*, and *KNIGHTRIDERS*. As an actor Warner Shook appeared in *KNIGHTRIDERS* and *CREEPSHOW* and is now behind the cameras as director of "Grandma's Last Wish."

"Inside the Closet," starring Fritz Weaver and Roberta Weiss features veteran Romero's make-up artist and actor Tom Savini as director. The story revolves around Gail Aynsley, an ill-fated graduate student, who rents an off-campus room with a small closet containing a horrifying creature. In addition to making his directorial debut, Savini created the murderous humanoid thing in the box.

"I directed some plays in high school, and also bits and pieces in horror films around my special effects," said Savini. "I would speak to a director and hopefully get the opportunity to include shots that I wanted, to make my magic trick work. I found directing intoxicating, absolutely intoxicating. I've worked with some directors who just didn't understand special effects work and this was my chance to call every shot."

The shoot on "In the Closet" lasted four and a half days with an additional day of inserts. Savini used video assists to improve his visual perception with regard to what his audience would see. He would sit off to the side or under the steps for the scene in which Lizzy, the little creature in the show, walks down the stairs, and use a monitor so he could see exactly what the camera was seeing, the same way the home audience would view the show. This method, however, did cause some problems on the set.

"Some people didn't like the idea of video assist," Savini admitted. "They weren't used to working with it and the cables would get in the way. It was a lot more to coordinate for people who were used to shooting features."

Like many a director before him, Savini had to learn to wrestle with the unexpected during production. Storyboards and shot lists had been prepared before the sets were constructed. "A lot of things that we had planned on paper, that looked good on paper wouldn't fit on the set," said Savini. "There were angles we couldn't do, like a dolly and pullaway for the reveal scene of Lizzy. It was like shooting in a shoebox."

The design and creation of the humanoid creature by Savini took about five weeks for a project that would normally call for a two-month schedule. The make-up artist and his crew worked 17-hour shifts daily to finish on time. Savini sculpted the character in two weeks and then called in Dave Kindlon and Pat Fantall. Using Savini's molds, they made foam skins and put them over mechanical, fiberglass armatures. Remote control eyes were installed as well as a lot of cable mechanisms which allowed Lizzy to smile, bend its fingers, and open its hand. An operator's arm placed inside up to the head added additional life.

"It's just a glorified, hideous muppet," claimed Savini (although his pride in the creation is quite evident). He had wanted the creature to be "dynamic" since it was to be the centerpiece of his first directing credit. To insure that it would be as effective as possible the director put in his own money to supplement the

low budget scheduled by Laurel.

Some of the series' scriptwriters have been given a chance to direct their own stories. The multifaceted John Harrison wrote and also directs "I'll Give You a Million." Harrison has appeared in a couple of Romero films and wrote the original score for *CREEPSHOW*. Veteran character actor Keenan Wynn stars as Duncan Williams, a millionaire whose scheme to buy his friend, Jack Blaine's (George Petrie) soul for a million dollars and resell it at a profit backfires when Jack dies and Williams suddenly discovers that someone else is intent on getting the soul.

Richard Rubinstein doesn't feel that the restrictions of television programming will side-track *TALES FROM THE DARK SIDE*. "What we are doing is instinctive on our part," he said. "We've seen enough television to know what is acceptable." But, just in case, someone from Lexington looks at the first assemblage of each show with acceptability in mind.

"So far, we've only had a couple of language comments from them," Rubinstein continued. "We say *darn* instead of *damn*. We didn't have any comments on the pilot program which surprised us a little because the story is about an adult who doesn't treat kids very nicely. It's almost a little bit sadistic. That didn't bother anybody at all. What they tend to look at is not thematic aberrations, but specifics like language or graphic horror. The very nature of the material for this program, however, doesn't rely on overly graphic visuals or strong language to be effective."

The producers are using wit and humor to give episodes a light touch. "We want people to laugh a little bit and we want to create a certain amount of tension," said Rubinstein. In Ellison's "D'Jinn, No Chaser" both are realized. A couple, Danny and Connie Squires, become the possessors of a magical Aladdin's lamp. To their dismay the inhabitant isn't your benevolent genie, but Jan Bin Jan who is pissed-off having been cooped up in the lamp for ten thousand years. When Connie finally manages to free the genie the gag is that he looks suspiciously like Kareem Abdul Jabbar. What a way to save on special effects.

Only a handful of suspense anthology shows have been successful on the tube. The blockbuster motion picture hits of recent years have spawned a renewed interest in the genre among television executives desperately trying to retain their vanishing audience. For years television has hired people to duplicate the success of their theatrical counterparts. George Romero's entry into the field is the first time since Alfred Hitchcock hosted a series that a recognized pro in the field has turned his talents to a corresponding television series. Suddenly, the small screen has garnered the attention of the big boys and Romero is being joined by Steven Spielberg who has announced his own series for NBC in the fall of 1985 entitled *AMAZING STORIES*. The television audience may be the big winners. □

## THE SCORE

continued from page 14

very fond of that theme," Bernstein said. "Unfortunately, because of the way the picture goes there was relatively little I could do with it."

Bernstein's only real dismay over the score is that his music, as was the case previously in *ANIMAL HOUSE*, *MEATBALLS*, and *HEAVY METAL*, is overshadowed by the prevalent use of rock-and-roll songs during many scenes, a predicament Bernstein is begrudgingly learning to live with.

"I'm really not happy with it," he said. "John Landis and Ivan Reitman are both extremely gifted and they really have a sense for the market. I think using the rock-and-roll songs is part of their awareness of this market. Quite honestly, they do it because they think it's going to help sell their picture. Obviously, as a composer, I don't much care for it. I'd rather handle the whole thing myself and, ultimately, I don't think it's as good for a film as having a completely composed score. But it's very hard to argue with something like the Ray Parker, Jr. song from *GHOSTBUSTERS*, when it is in the top ten."

The conflict between rock songs and orchestral scoring has plagued film composers for years. Even now in this post-*STAR WARS* era where the symphonic score has regained its respectability, Bernstein and other composers are still confronted by producers or studios who demand theme songs or rock scores to boost the marketability and promotion of their movies. To Bernstein and many others, a foot-tapping rhythm will never equal the dramatic atmosphere that an orchestral score can provide.

While Bernstein did like the Ray Parker Jr. title song, (which, incidentally, is a musical clone of Huey Lewis and the News's 1983 hit, "I Want A New Drug"), there were other places—such as the scene in which the ghosts are released from the Busters' headquarters and wisp their way back to Sigourney Weaver's apartment building—in which the rock music provided little atmosphere or dramatic support to the visual, only a distracting rhythm and beat. This isn't what makes good movie music, according to Bernstein.

"I have nothing against rock-and-roll, per se," Bernstein said. "I think if it's appropriate, then fine. What bothers me, is that it's a shame that in a film like *GHOSTBUSTERS* one feels compelled to put in a rock-and-roll tune for public acceptance. There isn't any real reason why *GHOSTBUSTERS* had to have rock-and-roll music—after all, it's not *FOOT-LOOSE!*"

When allowed its own space, though, Bernstein's music breathes with its own seething life—capturing the windy spirit of Gozer, the seductiveness of Zui, the roarings of Terror Dogs. In *GHOSTBUSTERS*, Bernstein continues to find in science fiction films, welcomed opportunities for musical inventiveness, as he did thirty years ago in *ROBOT MONSTER*.

"Science fiction is a composer's holiday," he said. "It gives you such a wide range of things you can do and experiment with." □

## 2010: ODYSSEY TWO

continued from page 11

and *BLADE RUNNER*, et. al., that 2001 looks a little dated today," commented Brenner in reference to the appearance of the Discovery. "It is so slick and padded that it looks like the inside of an automobile. We went for more of a 'Das Space Ship' quality—ours is a working ship, a kind of submarine in space. It's not plush, with everything buried in the walls; we have wires and cables and all the mechanisms that operate the ship visible. The color inside is battleship gray, and there are a lot of graphics in Russian to delineate areas and access panels and things. Our doors even work like submarine hatches, like the doors in the Columbia space shuttle—they're hinged and they swing open and shut."

Because nine years have elapsed between the two stories, technically-minded audiences can expect to see a degree of advancement in the Leonov's interior design—but not a great deal since Brenner doesn't think that technology will have necessarily moved that far ahead in the next twenty-five years or so. Hyams wanted designs that would strike a balance between today's technology and the future as Kubrick's production designer for 2001, Tony Masters, foresaw it.

Thus, the simple flight deck of the Discovery has given way to the Leonov's elaborate navigational and computer data panels, with 124 television monitors sprinkled about the cabin. The console shared by the pilot and co-pilot is covered with buttons and switches, all within arm's reach, much like the cockpit of a 747 or the Concorde. There is also an exploratory probe and a docking ring, which, according to Brenner, "is the most advanced piece of technology we have on the ship."

Brenner had fourteen weeks of actual set construction time before shooting began. While he researched and planned the interiors of the Leonov, his set designers were already at work building the Discovery pieces.

Aside from adjustments and repairs that need to be taken care of during shooting, there are several earth sets—houses, a hospital, and related buildings—which are only in the early stages of construction. One such house is the one belonging to Floyd,

with an ocean-fed pool, frequented by dolphins, leading into the living room.

Brenner's search for unusual textural materials for the interior of the Leonov led him to an industrial plastics recycling plant in Vernon, California called *Joe's Plastics*. Brenner bought a "mountain" of materials he found there, which he incorporated into the ship: children's car seats, the bottom halves of garbage disposals, small motor housings, covers for lawn mower engines, among other items. Sheets from large paper cartons used to ship fluorescent tubing were stacked and vacuum-formed into sheets for the ship's walls. Even the styrofoam packaging for ice cream cones found its way into the ship's design.

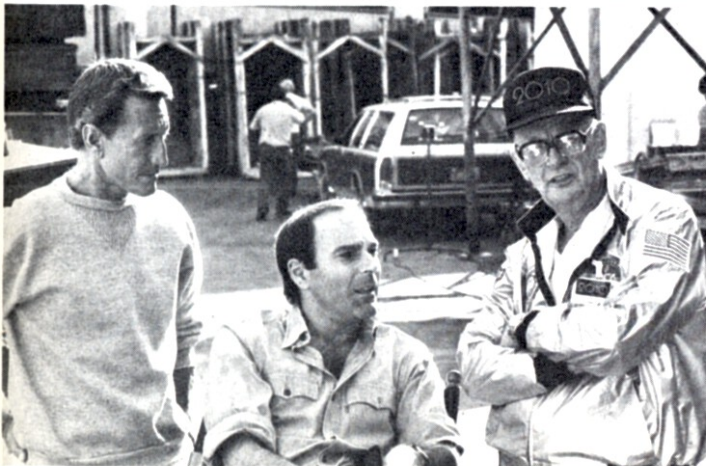
Everyone involved with 2010 is keenly aware of the high expectations for the film. To gauge audience response to the idea of making a sequel to Kubrick's masterpiece, Hyams prepared a brief announcement trailer that was paired with Barbara Streisand's *YEN TIL* last Christmas. It consisted simply of a series of slow dissolves of the huge red numerals 2-0-1-0, against a black background, with the familiar *Also Sprach Zarathustra* theme music played behind it.

The audience response, as Hyams put it, "Went beyond applause. There was this kind of reverential hush, then they started to cheer. I felt, oh my God, here it is, responsibility, because people's expectations are very high. You have probably the highest tradition of filmmaking to live up to. Everybody's a bit possessed by that on this film, which is nice because nobody will accept the ordinary."

Support from Kubrick and Clarke has not prevented Hyams from experiencing a certain amount of trepidation about following in Kubrick's footsteps. Interviewed one week before production began, he confessed, "The sound you hear is my ventricles closing."

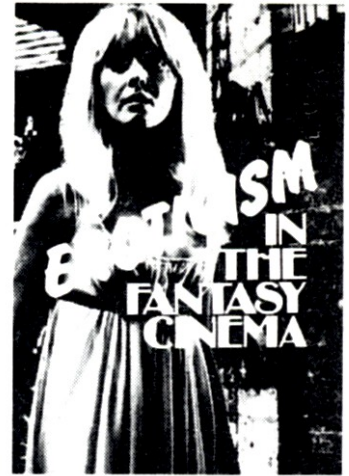
"No one can reproduce Kubrick and anybody who tries to copy him is making a terrible, terrible mistake," Hyams concluded. "Because I'm making the film, by definition, it has to be very different. All you can do is tell the story, and tell it as best you can." □

Roy Scheider, director Peter Hyams, and author Arthur C. Clarke during filming.



## CFQ BOOKSHOP

### A PEEK AT THE EROTIC IN GENRE FILMS



Author Bill George gives us a well-documented, tongue-in-cheek study of the popular use of eroticism in fantasy films, a tradition which stretches from Ingrid Pitt in Robin Hardy's *THE WICKER MAN*, to Nastassja Kinski in Paul Schrader's *CAT PEOPLE*. With an introduction by genre great, Christopher Lee, the book contains two-hundred rare black and white photos, plus a full color bonus section. George explores the amorous nature of films made both here and abroad, and includes interviews with directors, stars and starlets (with a forward by *GHOULIES'* star Bobbie Bresee). A must for all. Paper, \$14.95

### THE HOUSE OF HORROR

The Complete Story of Hammer Films



Recently returned to stock—direct from England. Trace the history of the prolific Hammer Film production company, parent of such greats as: *THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN*, *THE HORROR OF DRACULA*, *HOUD OF THE BASKERVILLES*, and countless others. Contains exclusive stills, filmographies, and close-ups on actors like Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing who bare witness to this era of Hammer greatness. Also includes a "leading lady" photo section with notables such as Martine Beswick, and Joan Collins. Paper, \$7.98

### New Releases

#### CREATURE FEATURES MOVIE GUIDE

John Stanley's enchanting update to his previous review guide proves that bigger is often better! Now packed with over 3000 mini-reviews of tales of ghosts, ghouls, and other things that go "bump in the night." Over 300 pages accented with movie stills, and humorous illustrations paired with profound and mundane quotes from creature feature hits and misses. If you'd like an expert opinion on *EAT YOUR SKIN* before you rent the videotape, Stanley will provide it. A valuable companion for fantastic fanatics. Paper, \$7.95

#### WORLD OF STAR TREK

Attention Trekkies! This newly updated edition is *the* definitive directory to the Star Trek phenomenon. David Gerrold, author of "The Trouble With Tribbles" charts the course of the "good ship enterprise" from its 1966 origins on television to its latest motion picture installment, *STAR TREK III: THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK*. Scriptwriters' notes, interviews with stars and creators, plus more than 100 photos from the TV series and all 3 motion pictures detail the magic that made the myth. 210 pages. Paper, \$8.95

ORDER TOLL FREE BY PHONE OR USE ORDER FORM PROVIDED, SEE PAGE 61

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

### VOL 13 NO 2/3

This special double issue features the effects seen in John Carpenter's shocking remake of Howard Hawks' 1950 classic, *THE THING*. The eye-popping, stomach-wrenching transformations of Carpenter's rendition were created by Rob Bottin. This issue includes production sketches and an in-depth discussion with Bottin. A 20 page preview of *KRULL* rounds out this "double feature." The 1982 *Sword and Sorcery* saga featured impressive effects by maestro Derek Meddings, as well as make-ups by Nick Maley, which made the mythical world of *KRULL* a reality.

### VOL 12 NO 5/6

Good things *do* seem to come in pairs! Another double issue highlighting the effects of Ridley Scott's *BLADERUNNER*, and Nicholas Meyer's box office hit, *STAR TREK II: THE WRATH OF KHAN*, the second movie installment of the popular television series. Volume features 28 colorful pages of production designs, photos, sketches, and commentary that gave rise to the futuristic world of Ridley Scott's visual masterpiece; *STAR TREK II* section features the stunning effects produced by George Lucas' ILM for the Enterprise's second movie voyage.

### VOL 9 NO 3/4

This issue is devoted to Disney's launching into the misty realms of hi-tech effects through science fiction films with their release of *THE BLACK HOLE*. A 60 page effects extravaganza carries us through the stages of preproduction, production, and post production of the film. Mechanical effects, matte scans, set design, costumes and wire work, direction, and model photography, are discussed by the people who made them happen. This vintage edition also recaps the progression (and often, regression) of genre films of the decade (1970's).

### VOL 6 NO 4/ VOL 7 NO 1

And finally, the film that started the state-of-the-art technology trend in contemporary moviemaking, *STAR WARS*. This issue is a definite *must* for movie fans and historians alike. Included are "twenty-three interviews with the actors, technicians and filmmakers who brought the magic of space opera to the screen as never before." John Dykstra, Richard Edlund, Adam Beckett, Dennis Muren, John Stears, Rick Baker, Joseph Johnston, and Grant McCune are among the talented people who contributed to this groundbreaking science fiction phenomenon.

## BACK ISSUES

ORDER TOLL FREE BY PHONE OR USE  
ORDER FORM PROVIDED, SEE PAGE 61



## STATE OF THE ART

continued from page 30

ments in image production, developments which may make computer simulation at last a powerful force in feature film production.

A new technique, called "ray tracing" has been able to create images of startling realism and detail. This technique works by following rays of light back from the eye to the light source, with the computer calculating all the bounces in between off objects in the scene. In addition to its incredible realism, this method also has the capability to eat up computing power at a rate Pacman would envy.

"Ray tracing makes fantastic looking pictures, but it takes forever," Blinn lamented. "When you have a ray going off in a particular direction, you have to calculate what it hits. You may have 5,000 objects in a scene and you test each one. One short piece, done with a ray tracing program developed at Cal Tech, took two hours per frame on a Cray."

Digital Productions does not use ray tracing in its work. "They are a commercial organization, so a lot of the techniques they are using are old," explained Blinn. "Ray tracing is being used by Lucasfilm a lot. It's not clear that it is what is needed to make movies wonderful, but it will make them more realistic."

Blinn feels positive about the future of computer graphics, despite what he described as a "boom or bust" market for the techniques. "When they first see it, people start to say, 'Now we can make whole feature films by pushing a button!' But, turning your fantasies into a real production system is far more immense than anyone believed possible."

Despite the limitations, however, more films are scheduled to employ extensive computer graphics, including 2010, now in post-production at MGM. Durinski is confident that the high visibility location of his Omnibus Company at Paramount will attract studio business.

"We're not looking to put animators or model makers out of business," he emphasized, "we work together, to supplement them. There is less opposition finally, and a lot of the studios are, in fact, interested in what is going on."

For all Blinn's eminence in the field (according to Durinski, "There are ten top people in computer graphics and Jim is seven of them."), Blinn was cautious in speculating about the future of the technology.

He did allow himself one fantasy scenario about graphics. "Ten years from now everyone will have a Cray on a chip, in their coffee pot or microwave, and you'll have real time (no waiting for the computing) ray tracing and everyone can do it in their home. When thousands have that capability, you will see a different kind of artistic expression."

With 2010 scheduled for December release, and keeping its use of computer graphics under wraps at this point, audiences may soon have an opportunity to peer at a speeding spacecraft and wonder, "Is that real?" □

## STAR TREK III

continued from page 40

the moment... Such flaky, ersatz mysticism would be more suited to a show entitled, "In Search of Spock."

The story also borrows heavily from the TV episode "Amok Time," in its evocation of Vulcan ritual attended by humans and the pon farr mating urge, and especially from "The Menagerie," probably one of the best, most complex, and most sophisticated of the TV episodes. Instead of Spock facing court martial to go to a forbidden planet and to save his former captain from a state near death, it is now Kirk and the crew who do the same for Spock out of loyalty and friendship.

Aside from the old chestnut theme of "technology gone awry" and the mystical promise of immortality through convenient safe deposit boxes for souls, the theme of old age is, for the third time, harped on. Only this time everything is getting old—the crew, the Enterprise, the Spock child, and even Genesis (the planet). If *STAR TREK IV* wants to do the "getting old" routine right, I suggest a scene where the crew on the bridge of the new Enterprise pass around and drink bottles of prune juice and Geritol, while singing songs like "Old Lang Sync."

Though this film is certainly the best of the three, and a giant step in the right direction, I was somehow left, like the *Excelsior*, in space dock because the movie is centered around a black hole: Spock's absence. Everything revolved around Spock, but there was no Spock to act as part of the Enterprise team. Spock, Kirk, and McCoy are parts of the human psyche which make up a unity, a trio going back to the commander, doctor, and scientist in *FORBIDDEN PLANET*. As Kirk says of Spock, "I've left the noblest part of myself on that planet." Each part is an extension and complement of the other and without one, the resulting void prevents us from experiencing that true interplay and relationship between the characters; the result is that all the character's relationships are developed—except Spock's.

Spock is like another much-loved, unemotional character of deductive logic: Sherlock Holmes. Nimoy has actually played Holmes, and *STAR TREK II* director Nicholas Meyer has been a Holmes novelist. For the next *Star Trek* film, the writer and director should realize that Spock's presence is just as necessary for *Star Trek* as Sherlock Holmes' is for the Conan Doyle detective tales. After Holmes was supposedly killed by Professor Moriarty at Reichenbach Falls, he miraculously returned but was not, according to many readers, really the same man ever again. (There is a similar cliff fighting scene with Kirk and Krige on Genesis.)

One hopes that Spock will return whole and vital, with his memory intact, and that the *Star Trek* films will, consequently, live long and prosper. Like the immortal Alice in Wonderland, or Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street, the character Spock has found an eternal place in the mythology of popular culture, where he is—and ever shall be—our friend. □

## RADIOACTIVE

continued from page 19

co's Haight-Ashbury district), and the bombshelter (which comes complete with a two-car garage). Mark Moses, a winner of several CLIO awards, serves as the film's visual consultant, with Chester Kaczinski (THE RETURN) handling art direction.

Principal photography, by German cinematographer Thomas Mauck, who shot many of Werner Herzog's films, began in March in Pyun's native Hawaii, on the island of Hawaii. The remote locations—in the mountains and on the site of the Mauna Loa volcano, where an unexpected eruption occurred on the first day of shooting—generated some visually sensational dallies, according to publicist Scott Fields.

Cast and crew spent most of their final week of production in Los Angeles, working with a 14-foot high mechanical rat created by Charles and Steven Chiodo, with 22 separate functions and 12 operators—giving it head, arm, and body movement capabilities—said to be the most advanced pneumatically controlled robot ever constructed for a motion picture. Star Lisa Blount does a scene while standing in the rat's mouth. Her stunt double Andre Gibbs, wife of the film's stunt coordinator Alan Gibbs, takes over for Blount's death scene in which she is eaten alive by the rat.

Michelle Simmons, who has created a new dance for the film known as the "post-nuke shuffle," supervised the choreography for the film's climactic, six-minute dance sequence (featuring 400 extras) that was also filmed in Los Angeles.

Special prosthetic make-ups were created by Greg Cannom, who assisted Rick Baker on GREYSTOKE. Cannom's bizarre designs range from the mysterious reptile men to a wrinkled surf bunny (a girl whose excessive bathing in the post-nuclear sun has given her the appearance of a 90 year-old woman) and his favorite, the mutant surfers: those who refused to give up their treasured pastime, even though the ocean has become radioactive.

The surfers' skin, hanging loosely from their bones, is riddled with che-

motherapy patches and permanently-affixed barnacles, their long, scorched, platinum blonde hair is missing entire sections. Josephine Turner, who did the intricate hair ventilating for THE HOWLING and THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING WOMAN, will create the wigs. Straight and extra make-ups will be provided by Ve Neil and Rick Schwartz.

Special fire and mechanical effects will be handled by Joe Lombardi's Special Effects Unlimited (WAR-GAMES, APOCALYPSE NOW). The film's extensive stuntwork, under the direction of Alan Gibbs (CANNONBALL RUN) offers several cliff-hanging sequences: a chase on winding mountain roads involving female bikers, a high-speed helicopter pursuit, various gun battles and a warehouse explosion. Addi-



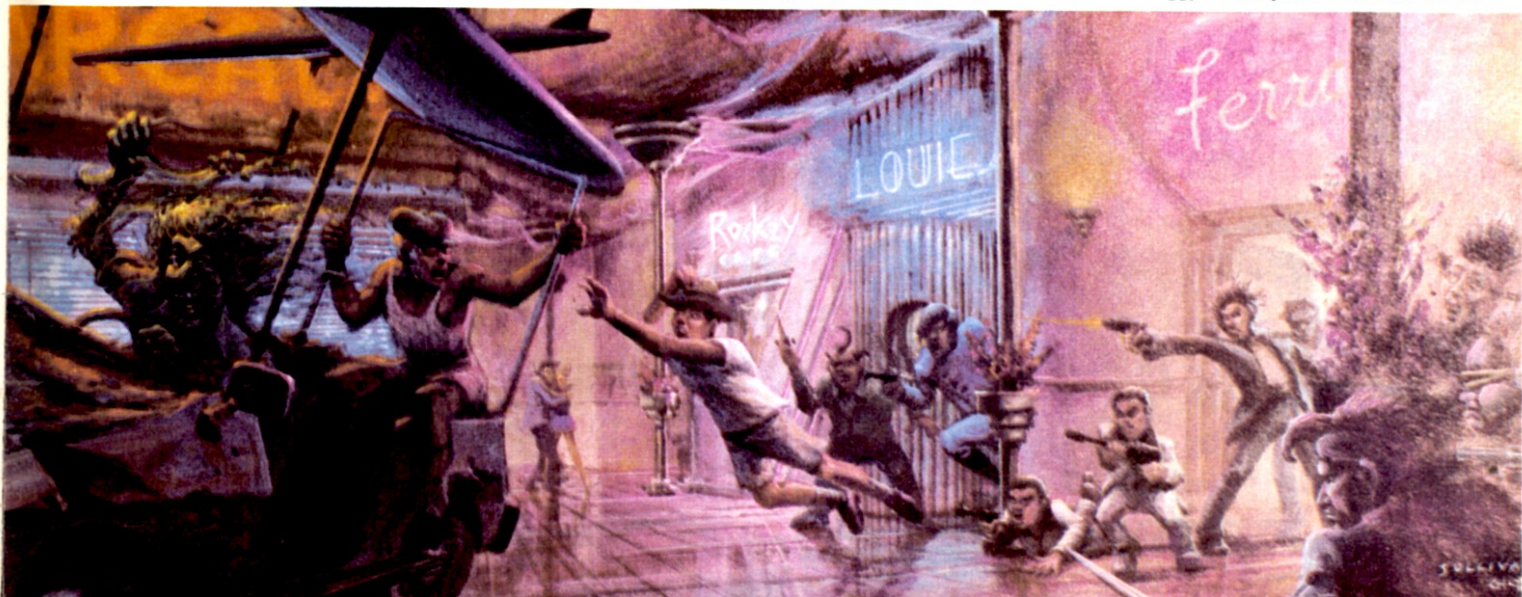
tionally, there will be a surfing sequence in a 'radioactive' ocean—a portion of the real ocean near the shoreline will be chemically dyed expressly for filming.

When he talks about RADIOACTIVE DREAMS, Pyun's excitement is contagious. The film has every indication of being another crowd-pleasing action film like THE SWORD AND THE SORCERER, only on an even larger scale. "RADIOACTIVE DREAMS is unique; there's nothing like it around," boasted Pyun. "Everyone who reads the script says, 'This would be perfect for my kids.' It does have strong youth appeal, since I think that young people control the cultural direction of America. But hopefully, you don't have to be a kid to enjoy it." □



Charles and Steven Chiodo's concept sketches of the appearance of RADIOACTIVE DREAMS' giant rat and its confrontation with star Lisa Blount. Inset: Blount poses with the giant fourteen-foot mechanical creation during the last week of shooting.

Phillip and Marlowe get a hostile reception from some unsavory characters in Edge City and barely escape on board a dune buggy driven by their radioactive friend.



## RAY HARRYHAUSEN

### VOL 11 NO 4

This 1982 issue of *Cinefantastique* features the first installment of Harryhausen's biography, the most extensive, widely documented, and fully detailed writing on the life and career of stop motion animation's greatest auteur. The article covers Harryhausen's early years, from 1920 to 1958 and tells of his inspiration and first breaks. The initial stages of Paul Schrader's sexy, poetic remake of *CAT PEOPLE* is also featured in this CFQ collector's favorite.



### VOL 10 NO 3

Ray Harryhausen's extraordinary talents are foregrounded in *CLASH OF THE TITANS* via his various stop motion creations. The elaborate effects that are his definitive trademark are discussed by Harryhausen himself, as well as other production aspects of *CLASH*. Also, *GREMLIN*'s director Joe Dante on *THE HOWLING*, and behind-the-scenes of Tobe Hooper's *FUN HOUSE*.



### VOL 6 NO 2

An interview with Harryhausen on the heels of the success of *SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER*. "Dynarama," the dimensional animation visual effects technique pioneered by Harryhausen is reviewed and illustrated with frame blow-ups from the aforementioned movie. Producer Paul Lazarus III's discussion of the filming of *CAPRICORN ONE*, and David Allen on filming the special effects for *THE CRATER LAKE MONSTER* rounds out this Fall 1974 edition.



### VOL 3 NO 2

Producer Charles Scheer speaks out about his long association with animation master Ray Harryhausen and their work together on *THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD* in an exclusive *Cinefantastique* interview. Also, a conversation with Richard Matheson, genre scriptwriter extraordinaire; *THE NIGHT STALKER*, *THE OMEGA MAN*, and *THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN* are among his numerous screen credits.



## BACK ISSUES

ORDER TOLL FREE BY PHONE OR USE ORDER FORM PROVIDED, SEE PAGE 61

## GREMLINS

continued from page 44

toons are being attacked these days for their violence, one person's violence may be another's punch line. When Stripe attacks Billy with a chainsaw (another in-joke?), or you see Mrs. Deagle flying through the attic window still seated in her hydraulic lift chair, we instinctively feel that it is somehow inappropriate to laugh, but the guffaw overtakes us nonetheless. *GREMLINS* works on you that way; you're so caught off guard by the movie's sheer audaciousness that it becomes part of its appeal (not unlike *AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON*).

To be fair to Dante, *GREMLINS* was much more violent in its first draft. Dante and producer Mike Finnell decided to make the gremlins more like technological pranksters than man-eating monsters, a reference to a time in WWII America (recounted by Dick Miller's "buy American" Mr. Futterman in the film) when some patriotic citizens believed that "gremlins" were being planted in machinery by the enemy to cripple our defense system. At the risk of assigning political themes to a piece of tomfoolery, one could make case for the gremlins as symbolically representing a Communist invasion. It's certainly no accident that Dante has included a clip from *INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS*, viewed in its time of McCarthyism as an anti-communist work.

So, while they do bite, the gremlins largely stick to shenanigans like tampering with traffic signals and sabotaging people's car brakes, though they are responsible for the deaths of Mrs. Deagle and high school science teacher Glynn Turman (a fine black actor who is relegated to a "token", cardboard role—the evil scientist who experiments on an "cute" gremlin; extracting an inordinate amount of blood, and later literally "getting it in the end" with the same hypodermic). One still gets the feeling, however, that the mean gremlins are really being punished because they are offensive to look at; Hollywood has never been comfortable with ugly. McCain's siege against them seems too harsh, considering that all they have done up to the point where she enters the kitchen is to eat up her home-made gingerbread men (admit it, you did it as a kid too!). Spielberg insisted that Dante add the shot of Gizmo pinned to the dart board by the gremlins to show their vicious nature, but it doesn't quite wash. Surely they could have hit a target as large as Gizmo if they'd wanted.

Overall, however, *GREMLINS* may well prove to be the summer's best popcorn movie. If it tends to falter in non-action scenes (Phoebe Cates' confession about why she hates Christmas should have been buried with her fictitious father), or indulge itself too often (the clichéd statement at the end by Keye Luke, soothsayer—come on), it's excusable, because it delivers so consistently otherwise. Dante is a truly subversive filmmaker, and there's always a place in Hollywood for a risk-taker, even one who just might be on the side of the gremlins. □

## GHOSTBUSTERS

continued from page 45

editing would have helped. But this is a relatively minor cavil, as are complaints about some of Richard Edlund's incredibly ambitious special effects. Edlund and his crew sweated under a tight deadline, and the pressure is apparent in a couple of matte paintings that do not cut in well, and in some sloppy optical compositing that compromises the fine stop-motion animation by Randy Cook. Generally-speaking, though, Edlund and his Boss Film Company have delivered. The deliciously absurd Mr. Stay-Puft, alone, is worth the price of admission.

John DeCuir's production design is lush and appropriately stylized. Dana Barrett's penthouse apartment—so deco it's decadent—is a special treat. Laszlo Kovacs' cinematography glitters. Sigourney Weaver seems quite at home in such surroundings. The epitome of class and delectability, Weaver smolders across the screen in her best role since *ALIEN*. SCTV alumnus Rick Moranis does a hilarious turn as Dana's geeky neighbor, while Annie Potts, Eric Hudson, and William Atherton are effective in smaller roles. Actress Slavtiza Jovan is especially memorable as the sexy, ember-eyed incarnation of the demon *Gozer*.

Aykroyd and Ramis are fine—Aykroyd with his resolute walk and blank confusion (he reminds me of *The Stooges'* Larry Fine); Ramis with his tinny voice and faintly pompous manner. Both actors underplay, in obvious deference to Bill Murray. Watching Murray effortlessly dominate *GHOSTBUSTERS* is like listening to Victor Borge have fun with a piano concerto, or observing a great boxer toy with a flatfooted opponent. There is nothing arrogant about Murray's performance, so we can't say that he rises above his (very funny) material; he seems rather to move beyond it, to some point in another dimension that allows him to approach his lines and his character at oblique, delightfully eccentric angles. He understands what's expected of him, and delivers, but with a wryness and sense of ironic detachment that is pure joy. I wonder if anybody was surprised when they saw the dailies and realized that—bam!—no contest, Murray *owned* the movie.

Murray's Dr. Venkman not only gives *GHOSTBUSTERS* its special cheek and irreverence, but brings a dimension of subtle social satire. Venkman has no illusions about himself or his comrades—he knows that ghostbusting is a pretty silly way to make a living. When the trio become media darlings and make the covers of *Time*, *USA Today*, and *The Atlantic*, Venkman revels in the attention, greeting his fans and working the adoring crowds with all the slick shamelessness of Pia Zadora. Venkman hasn't been fooled by the American cult of celebrity. He—and the movie—throw our gullibility right back at us. We don't mind, though, because *GHOSTBUSTERS* lets us know that sass is healthy, and that good deeds, good friends, and belly laughs are all that really matter. □



## LITHGOW

continued from page 11

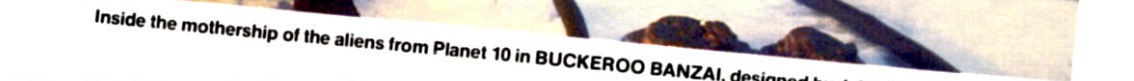
You see the Discovery spinning in space end over end and the three big light sources, Jupiter and two of her moons are spinning crazily around us."

Lithgow spent about two and a half months on 2010: ODYSSEY TWO, completing his role in mid-May. Lithgow is also involved in a subplot with Russian actor Elliott Baskin who plays Max. Dramatic license has been taken with Clarke's original material and the cinematic space walk will be a more serious affair than in the book, with a more tragic consequence.

Lithgow slips easily into character when discussing his work. If you press for too many details about the secretive 2010 you get admonished gently. "Patient must you be," croaked Lithgow in a voice that is distinctly Yoda's. Lithgow played the Jedi master on the PBS radio adaptation of the STAR WARS saga.

Lithgow first gained national attention when he was nominated for an Academy Award for his performance as Roberta Muldoon in THE WORLD ACCORDING TO GARP. Since then the actor has had a wide variety of roles and variety is the key word. Lithgow never seems to play the same type twice. He threatened Nancy Allen and John Travolta as a mad killer in Brian DePalma's BLOW OUT, kept an entire community at bay with his religious fervor in FOOTLOOSE, his conservative banker Sam Burns bedded Debra Winger in TERMS OF ENDEARMENT, another role that earned him an Academy Award nomination, and TWILIGHT ZONE: THE MOVIE found him as a terrified passenger aboard an airliner with an unwanted guest.

Lithgow first found himself in front of the camera after a long career in theatre when he was cast in Brian DePalma's OBSESSION. He learned that the director was less involved in the actor's process than some of the others he subsequently worked with. "[DePalma] relies very much on an actor's ability to save his ass," said Lithgow. "Brian's ingenuity goes into the construction of the story, pinning those index cards onto the walls



Inside the mothership of the aliens from Planet 10 in BUCKEROO BANZAI, designed by J. Michael Riva.

of his office, lining up the shots, and in the cutting and postproduction of the film. I think he subscribes to Hitchcock's dictum that principal photography is a necessary evil. Brian would basically sit there and watch people setting up the shot. He really didn't get in there and get his hands dirty."

Lithgow met George Miller at a casting interview. The director, according to Lithgow, is a great fan of DePalma's, and had seen Lithgow in BLOW OUT and wanted him for the lead in his segment of TWILIGHT ZONE: THE MOVIE. "I saw his storyboards, which had these faces grinning and sweating," said Lithgow. "I knew what he had in mind and just gave him everything."

BUCKEROO BANZAI gave Lithgow a chance at another wild, far-out role as the maniacal Dr. Emilio Lizardo, a Jekyll-and-Hyde mad scientist. Lithgow slipped into the character, a wild look in his eyes, saying "My room in the hospital for the criminally insane is absolutely jammed packed with Italian artifacts

such as a black velvet Last Supper on the wall. Lizardo's a man possessed, which makes him a nemesis to the great Buckaroo Banzai."

Flashbacks in the film show Lizardo as a brilliant young scientist carrying on experiments at Princeton, trying to break through to the 8th dimension which is, as Lithgow explained, "Matter through matter." A botched experiment brings devastating changes in the good doctor.

"I play Lizardo for most of the film in the present day," said Lithgow. "You see the results of this accident. I wear a set of rotting teeth, a bright red fright wig, and I have a wild stricken expression on my face. I'm kind of a cross between a poor man's Mussolini and a bag lady. I have a broad Italian accent and I sing Italian songs."

The film takes place in New Jersey and was shot on location using various derelict steel mills and abandoned factories in South Jersey and industrial sections of Los Angeles.

The possessed Lizardo houses the leader of the dreadful Lectroids from Planet 10. Though they are the incarnation of evil and ineptitude, all they really want is to get back home.

In preparing for the offbeat role, Lithgow insisted on a number of visual touches to bring the character to life. "Lizardo was a mad scientist, who feeds on electricity, so I had this idea that his hair stands up straight," he said. "Also this botched experiment had a catastrophic effect on him so I wanted something very bold to happen. I got this idea that the accident happened back in the '30's and Lizardo would be wearing this George S. Kaufman-like high Italian pompadore hair style, which the explosion turns bright red. I also looked at the character and thought that after all those years he wouldn't take care of the things that ordinary people take care of. Since these people feed themselves on sugar and Twinkies as well as electricity, I thought he'd have these terrible rotting teeth."

Makeup artist Tom Burman made up a set of brown, rotting teeth that give Lizardo a hideous, but still comical appearance. "Director W.D. Richter would sit and oversee make-up for hours," said Lithgow. "We had lots of makeup tests to ensure that each look would be different and unconventional. The final effect is not old age makeup, but more the effect of being ravaged like a machine that has been used too much. Lizardo looks spent. I would grow my beard regularly so that it was always long and scruffy."

As a serious actor with a growing popularity, Lithgow summed up what he's trying to achieve as a performer. "I'm trying to pull off a sort of hat trick by doing theatre as well as fantastical entertainment," he said. "I want to do serious films too and to maintain my reputation with all of these people." □

John Lithgow as Dr. Emilio Lizardo in BUCKEROO BANZAI, checking out of the hospital for the criminally insane.



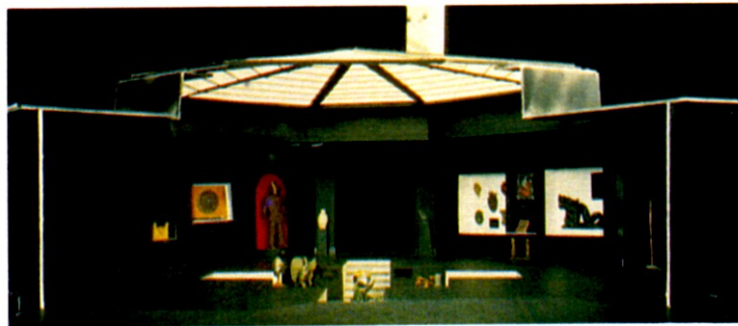
# TANGENTS

can work out of and direct my own films," he said. "It will have a live action division and an effects division. For the effects division, I would like to have what I think will be, probably, the only East Coast studio with a complete in-house 35mm and 16mm effects facility. We have started doing effects sequences for independent features, between our own work, and while we're in development on our next film."

Chorvinsky's studio recently completed post-production work on a science fiction film, directed by John Huckert, titled *THE PASSING*. Chorvinsky's staff supplied a quota of illusions including combinations of bottom-lit and top-lit animation, unusual cloud tank effects (which Chorvinsky trademarks as "dye-sky"), and induced motion effects, "where we take an image and transform it visually into any shape we want and give it motion."

One of Chorvinsky's earliest inspirations was the "skeleton sword fight" sequence from *JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS*, fostering an admiration for the work of animator, Ray Harryhausen. When Chorvinsky was appointed one of three U.S. delegates to attend an '82 International Special Effects Symposium at Pinewood Studios, he savored the opportunity to finally meet Harryhausen face-to-face.

"He was a really great guy," Chor-



Miniature sets of the Biological Anomalies Room (top) and the Pit Room (bottom) of the Museum of Strangeness. Casey Dimenico as Aria is shown (inset) in a front projection composite with the miniature. Right: A detail from the Pit Room model.

vinsky recalled fondly. "We spoke for a long time. He was helpful, and answered all of my questions. He was really straightforward about everything. He told me to go ahead and do my own stop motion, and to work pretty much by myself. And that's what I did."

*STRANGETANGENTS* personifies Chorvinsky's fascination with stop motion, utilizing no less than fifteen animation cuts. Blended in the film are a myriad of sophisticated effects techniques rarely used in the less expensive 16mm film format. Chorvinsky's film was entered in the Best Short Subject category for last year's Academy Awards but failed to garner a nomination. Chorvinsky, however, is too busy to contemplate disappointment.

Borrowing Douglas Trumbull's idea, Chorvinsky sold *STRANGETANGENTS* for screenings at Chuck E. Cheese's Family Entertainment Centers in Maryland and Virginia. (Rival Showbiz Pizza is teamed with Trumbull's Showscan shorts). Chorvinsky is also planning to include the

film in a feature anthology of shorts called the *FANTASTIC FILM FESTIVAL*, being readied for distribution this fall.

With several projects in development, including a rock video, Chorvinsky eventually hopes to turn his full attention to a feature film, *CREATURES OF DARKNESS*, a Lovecraftian horror film.

Anyone with a penchant for administering greasepaint, who may also harbor an inclination to crash into movies, should take heart to hear that "it's a film about filmmaking, and it involves some state-of-the-art make-up transformations. To do the film, I'm going to need to find people on the East Coast who are incredible make-up artists, who would really like to collaborate on a project like this. We're going to need to put together a whole new crew. We'll have some computer animation—there are two very unusual nightmare sequences—and that's probably all I should say!"

Chorvinsky did reveal, however, that his projected budget ranges from

one and a half to two million dollars, which he has yet to raise. "What we're hoping to do, is to put together a limited partnership offering, and people will be able to invest in the film." The filmmaker visited the Cannes Film Festival last May to pre-sell territorial rights to the film, and help snare investors.

Dotting the walls of Chorvinsky's studio are the elaborate storyboards for *CREATURES OF DARKNESS*. If the illustrations are transferred faithfully to film, Lovecraft aficionados will definitely *not* be disappointed. □



Top Left: A background plate of the Wizard's Den set miniature. Middle Left: Two shots of Newt, the film's stop-motion character, composited into the set via front projection. Bottom Left: Chorvinsky animates Newt before front projection screen.



Left: Wizard's Den model set. Filmmaker Mark Chorvinsky economized by building some of the film's sets as miniatures. Above Top: Lighting the miniature set, clockwise from lower left, William Dempsey, Elliot Berlin, director Mark Chorvinsky, Greg Snook, and Charles Brand. Above Inset: Detail of some miniature books in the set.

## STARFIGHTER

continued from page 46

to make a few more bucks off the teen market by selling us yet another Luke Skywalker clone.

Guest's hero is an earnest soul trapped as his mother's trailer park handyman in "small town U.S.A." By accident, one of the Starfighter video games has shown up in his out-of-the-way corner of the world, and although his "hot to trot" girlfriend, Catherine Mary Stewart, hints that Guest spends more time pawing the video game than her, Guest finds it a better way to work off his frustrations about trying to go to college in the Big City and soon becomes a wiz at the game.

But from here on, the film is pretty hard to love. Though *THE LAST STARFIGHTER* takes off into a welter of incredible special effects, the story quickly nosedives into yet another STAR WARS rehash of good aliens against bad aliens. Nick Castle's flatfooted direction walks the film through its paces, actually taking the time to send Guest back to Earth.

Dan O'Herlihy never gets to do anything with his role as Grig, a "gung-ho" lizard pilot who can't understand why Guest would want to miss such a good fight against overwhelming odds. O'Herlihy was practically the only saving grace of *HALLOWEEN III* and could have provided some balance to Guest's bland acting, but here he only gets to sit behind Guest most of the time and provide homilies like, "I thought there was a Starfighter sitting in that chair." Give me a break.

Guest looks a little lost in the proceedings, and only abandons his mechanical, "matter of fact" persona when he doubles for his own character as an android left on earth to fill in. The android is a great character, trying to cope with interplanetary assassins and Stewart wanting to put her tongue in his ear. Guest shows some subtle work here, but Castle makes the android's brief story little more than an excuse to throw in some bumbling sex jokes. The stuff is awkwardly placed and much too identifiable as the filler between the special effects.

The makeups derived from Cobb's designs don't work very well, either. The aliens must have looked fine on paper, but in the film they look as rubbery and cheesy as anything that ever waddled on an Irwin Allen set. There's no excuse for this amateurish look. They got O'Herlihy's makeup right, and that of the invaders as well, so it really shows when Guest steps on an alien's foot and it squishes like a pillow.

The ho-hum story will be well worth it to technobuffs (who are the real audience for this film). For people who don't appreciate computer simulation, it may not be three-or-four-times-at-five-bucks-a-pop-nifty, and that's the repeat crowd films generally need to attract to do well these days.

The contrast is most acute between the live action and the breakthrough special effects; the half hour's worth of computer simulated spaceships and dogfights is a dream-made-real

for most computer effects buffs who always knew it would be done one day. Ron Cobb's design work is some of the best he's ever done; the good guys fly ships that look like second generation X-wings and the bad guys fly snazzy yellow ships with racing stripes that look like the rear tailfins of some superpimped Cadillac. Bringing them alive, the animation of John Whitney, Jr.'s Digital Productions is nothing short of remarkable. No jiggling matte lines, no color density mismatches, no out of focus shots... just bright and clear and colorful work, effortless in its motion and movement.

The finale where Guest's Gunstar sneaks up behind the mothership of the invader and her small escorts and attacks is a startling and jarring demonstration of just how quickly computer graphics have advanced since their last major exposure in *TRON*. As far as motion control photography and modelwork goes, *THE LAST STARFIGHTER* sounds its deathknell. Its effects are superior, and point the way toward worlds in film we have yet to imagine.

Digital Productions' computer technology may be leading the way, but in *THE LAST STARFIGHTER* it's bound to filmmakers looking in rear view mirrors at box office hits of the past. □

## STREETS OF FIRE

continued from page 41

els where *STREETS OF FIRE* fails. The expressionistic gang film had a fresh look (John Vallone's production design for *STREETS* is too reminiscent of *ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK* and *BLADE RUNNER* to stand on its own), and its stylized violence—bubbling forth from a self-contained world with its own jungle law—functioned as part of an abstract whole. There were no prefabricated heroes (or anti-heroes) or rock songs to act as window dressing, and the film didn't attempt to snowball its audience with a lot of blarney about an alternative universe to disguise an overall lack of inventiveness. It was real time with an unreal edge—not *mock* or *comic book* or even *movie-movie*—and even charged with a tension and dynamism that in *STREETS OF FIRE* is replaced with conceptually hollow razzle-dazzle.

Also, the point of a fable is to teach some sort of moral lesson, or at least enforce a useful truth. Not only do the one dimensional characters in Hill's scenario seem to learn nothing in the course of their adventures (and thus have nothing to teach us), but the message imparted to the young audience—that cunning and ruthlessness, above all else, is what it takes to survive in a world filled with moral and mortal dangers—is flippantly pessimistic and addresses only the thugs in the audience.

Probably the best lesson to be learned from a film as reactionary and ugly as *STREETS OF FIRE* is an artistic, rather than moral, one: a movie even peripherally about rock-and-roll should be made by people who understand what the musical form is about, not by those who simply pay it *dolby'ed* lip service. □

## CFQ BOOKSHOP

An exclusive on-the-set profile of the controversial director of *CARRIE*, *DRESSED TO KILL*, *BLOW OUT*, and *BODY DOUBLE*.

## MAKING DEPALMA'S BODY DOUBLE

# DOUBLE DEPALMA



A Film Study with Brian DePalma  
by Susan Dworkin  
Astor 1987, 111 pp.

Author Susan Dworkin explores the dark visions of obsessive filmmaker Brian DePalma on the set of his latest and very controversial film, *BODY DOUBLE*. As the first writer ever allowed access throughout the shooting and editing of a DePalma film, Dworkin illustrates her book with photos, and punctuates it with interviews, including adult film star and advisor Annette Haven, and executive producer Howard Gottfried (*ALTERED STATES*). Learn how this fascinating auteur planned his shoot, and improvised when plans weren't enough. 256 pages, 32 page photo section, 5 1/2 X 8 1/4. Cloth \$14.95, paper, \$8.95



A thorough examination of the graphic style of the British Hammer Studios' many horror productions, singling out the company's distinctive use of color, blood, violence, sex, and nudity. The book also provides insight into the behind-the-scenes personnel from effects technicians to makeup artists, and the renowned actors who helped earn Hammer its undisputed reputation. The conclusion focuses on the decline of the British film industry in the early '70's and Hammer's present day comeback efforts. Ideal for collectors of Hammer memorabilia; complete with over 175 photos, 8 1/2 X 11, 134 pages. Paper, \$9.95

## Classics of Modern Science Fiction

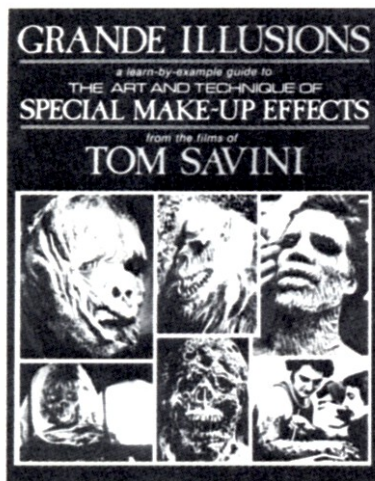
Crown Publishers presents a continuing series of modern science fiction classics, many of which have been out of print for years. In fine hardcover bindings with colorful dust jackets, this matched set of books makes the perfect starting point for your personal science fiction library. Collect them all! With a foreword by Isaac Asimov and an introduction by the editor which defines the unique place each work occupies in the history of the science fiction genre, each only \$8.95

- Men, Martians and Machines**  
Volume 1 by Eric Frank Russell
- The Joy Makers**  
Volume 2 by James Gunn
- The Shores of Another Sea**  
Volume 3 by Chad Oliver
- The Classic Phillip Jose Farmer, 1952-1964.** Volume 4
- The Classic Phillip Jose Farmer, 1964-1973.** Volume 5
- The Forgotten Planet**  
Volume 6 by Murray Leinster
- Unearthly Neighbors**  
Volume 7 by Chad Oliver
- The Paradox Men**  
Volume 8 by Charles A. Harness

ORDER TOLL FREE BY PHONE OR USE  
ORDER FORM PROVIDED, SEE PAGE 61

## SAVINI ON MAKEUP

Personally Autographed by author Tom Savini



The makeup supervisor of such gore "classics" as DAWN OF THE DEAD, CREEPSHOW, FRIDAY THE 13TH, and FRIDAY THE 13TH—THE FINAL CHAPTER gives a personal account of how he brought the dead to life, committed mass murder, and fooled audiences into believing all that flying latex was really blood 'n guts. With step-by-step photos, instructions and diagrams, Savini reveals the secrets that have made him the "King of Splatter"—secrets most makeup artists only learn the hard way! With introductory comments by Stephen King and George Romero. 8½ X 11, Paper, \$12.95



### Reach For The Stars

"We're roll(ing)...!"

Definitely one hieroglyphic you don't want to be without this holiday season. Enscribed with those immortal phrases uttered on every director's set, like: "action," "show business is my life," and "quiet on the set." A fanciful conversation piece for all film fans, this two-ply movie novelty comes packaged in a black and white art deco box; needs no gift wrapping. Don't miss out on these "glad tidings."

Paper (obviously), \$5.00

**A Great Gift!**

**ORDER TOLL FREE BY PHONE OR USE ORDER FORM PROVIDED, SEE PAGE 61**

### New Releases

#### FAST AND FURIOUS

The Story of American International Pictures, maker of films like BEACH BLANKET BINGO, THE ABOMINABLE DR. PHIBES, and I WAS A TEENAGEWEREWOLF. For pop culture fans, an indispensable sourcebook, for everyone else ... great stuff, 125 photos, filmography, index. Cloth, \$17.95

#### KEN RUSSELL'S FILMS

ALTERED STATES, and TOMMY are just two of the controversial films of director Ken Russell examined in Ken Hanke's book. Development of directorial style is plotted through the various films, as well as the way the films interrelate. Abundantly highlighted with quotes from Russell plus 50 photos (many from Russell's personal collection and never before published), 470 pages. Cloth, \$32.50

#### VINTAGE SCIENCE FICTION FILMS

A terrific guide to 375 science fiction classics from 1896-1949. Contains filmographies, plot summaries, critiques, anecdotes, discussions of actors, directors, and technical points that made these films so memorable. Fully-indexed, lots of photos. Cloth, \$19.95

### NEVERENDING

continued from page 45

the boy: "Never give up and good luck will find you." Falkor's allegorical nature remains true throughout, but his appropriately carefree attitude gets lost. A flippant "Sometimes I'll be with you, sometimes I won't," or a surprised "Oh good!" when he finds the lost amulet, would add so much to his personality, and to this film.

"We don't even care whether or not we care." This year-worn, lethargic attitude of the wise old resident of Shell Mountain, and his allergic reaction to dedicated youth, suggests a character whom we want to see more of, but his scene ends, and so much for him. Or the lovable rock biter who discovers that physical strength is not enough. Each character disappears after interacting with Atreyu because the boy must continue his quest alone; this makes sense thematically because THE NEVERENDING STORY is about self-belief and individual forthrightness. Unfortunately, squeezing all of these soul-evolving steps into a ninety-three minute movie makes for little more than a character parade.

Such an episodic route will not destroy a film, but here the thematic pathway marches up a staircase: upon each leg of Atreyu's journey, a different character defines his next step, his next test, and then the boy passes through it. Bastian, the reader, defines the danger of the Swamp of Sadness as Atreyu enters it; the gnome details both Oracle gates as the boy moves toward them; said Oracle tells Atreyu, generally, how the land must be saved; and the Princess, at the film's climax, tells him specifically, and explains what this whole tale means: allegorical bones are all too visible through the story's thin flesh.

Basically, Atreyu goes where people tell him to go and overcomes obstacles simply by his will to continue moving forward. Better if his development came through active uses of his morality, strength, and cunning. His only real action comes toward the film's end, where he calls on the Gmork, evil servant of the Nothing, to fight. But his performance is cut off cinematically: the boy challenges the beast the beast's head (and presumably body) comes darting out of its cave the beast lies there, Atreyu's hand on the bloody shard in its body, a couple of wounds on the boy. These cuts kill the drama and dampen Atreyu's climactic moment.

The film's best action is Nothing! Throughout THE NEVERENDING STORY, the most exciting moments belong to this antagonistic non-entity: the ground quakes; wind rips through the trees and scrapes off layers of geology; clouds swirl in a Bald Mountain ballet of foaming purple and black. Fantasia also hosts a beautiful array of peacetime cumulus. The activity of the land even spruces up Atreyu's actions: the boy looks his best as he interacts with it, galloping across the plains or trudging on through muddy swamps.

If only Bastian's pain came across as well. A brief breakfast scene establishes the loss of his mother, and the

fact that his father wants him to "keep (his) feet on the ground;" later, three innocent-looking "ruffians" dump him in a trash bin. As presented these are very "clean" troubles, reduced to their simplest terms and lacking any real detail, emotion, or bite. Unfortunately, the whole film hangs upon them.

For, as it turns out, Atreyu's odyssey is Bastian's odyssey. The book on which the film is based refers to this fact, in that through reading, the boy shares Atreyu's adventures, and learns from them. But when Atreyu looks into the Mirror Gate and sees Bastian as his own inner self, nothing happens to our hero; he passes through and continues on his journey. Atreyu should have stopped and questioned himself: am I just a little boy, like the representatives at the Ivory Tower said when I first appeared? How can I battle this ravenous Nothing?—No, I am Atreyu, I am me, I can do it, I can try.

As it is, the film ends with Atreyu listening to and following more instructions, and then only being partially successful, leaving his quest to be completed by the Princess, a previously unseen character. She summons Bastian verbally and his presence, without action, saves all. Actually, he shouts "I will do what I dream" and gives the Princess a new name. How this and its connection with his mother fits in allegorically to the boy's growth, let alone making any sense in relationship to keeping one's imagination alive, remains a neverending source of puzzlement.

The book explains the power of this renaming; it also presents a much more reasonable conclusion. For in the film, Bastian appears in the real world upon Falkor's back, and chases down the flabbergasted "ruffians" in a cheer-the-good-guy chase. This crossover seems to say that the boy triumphed over his antagonists because he believed in fantasy; a vague symbol promoting imaginative problem-solving whose drama overrides any real concept for dealing with real life troubles. It also contradicts the book, which details how inhabitants of Fantasia turn into lies if they cross into the real world. A clearer distinction is made between what Bastian learns within his fantasy, and how he applies it in his life.

Also, in print, the emphasis rests not upon trouncing some pseudo-ruffians but upon Bastian's improved self-image, his willingness to try on his own, his ability to reach out to others, much deeper and heartfelt. Why? The movie adapts only the first half of Michael Ende's book, cutting out Bastian's growth within Fantasia (book translation), but still insists upon wrapping things up by directly applying the boy's new self-confidence and initiative to the real world.

In condensing, the filmmakers oversimplified and jumbled the book's themes. They also played fast and loose with the visual appearance of characters. And inadvertently forced the author to remove his name. But they also brought their visuals to life, cut through some ponderous and bog-like episodic allegory, and made many scenes more cinematically

active and emotional. For the book does require drastic change in adaptation, being a long and introspective piece, but this particular metamorphosis just doesn't make it.

**THE NEVERENDING STORY**, as defined by its own Princess, pulls Bastian into Atreyu's story, and others, i.e. the audience, into Bastian's. But this cinematic story can't even hold its own. Only Noah Hathaway's charisma—coming through in spite of the fact that he has little to do but trudge through landscapes and shout for advice—plus Fantasia's wild menagerie of sights and an air of parent-pleasing G-rated fun, pulls you in. But, like a poor piece of pulp fiction, it's only worth flipping through, not really "reading." And so its source, *The Neverending Story*, can but climb back onto the bookshelf, wedging itself between *Something Wicked This Way Comes* and *The Lord of the Rings*, and be content with expression through the magical power of the printed page. The story lives on. □

## STEPHEN ARCHER

continued from page 45

motion control rig for it, that by the time they were both ready, we had time to do only one shot with it!

"I didn't have any input in the dragon design because I wasn't really keen on that aspect of it. Originally the producers wanted it complete with feathers. Fortunately, Brian was only too well aware of the problems involved in animation. I didn't need to tell him the headaches that would cause.

"The major problem for me was how to make the dragon fly, as it was designed without wings. I thought about making it move like a snake—you know, an undulating movement, or like a dolphin in water. I studied footage of snakes slithering and swans in flight. Suddenly the producers said they didn't want it done that way. But they were unsure of what exactly they did want. I honestly couldn't think of another way of approaching the problem.

"The pressure of the early April release date in Germany caused the most problems, not just for me, but for everybody. When I started on the film none of the animation had been planned for. They had put all their effort into getting the live action finished. As there were lots of problems with the remote control creatures, most of the engineers were tied up. I used this spare time for camera tests, and planning certain moves.

"By the time I got all the equipment in September of 1983, I received some bad news from Brian. The company that was going to marry all my blue screen shots with the live footage was now unable to do it. The company had a quick method of performing this marriage, by using a high resolution video link-up. The full load of work was to be shifted to ILM. Because they were up to their eyes with films like *INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM*, and *STAR TREK III: THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK*, I found their longer lead-time curtailed my production schedule from 5 months to 2½

months. It was very disappointing.

"When director Wolfgang Petersen finished all the work on the live action, he transferred his attention to me. We used to get together in his editing room and discuss each shot, as there were no storyboards. We would look at each sequence and then Juan Japl, the illustrator, would draw up a design based on our ideas. Petersen would then approve it and I would get the go-ahead. This process was repeated for each shot. It was a nice way of working, but it wasn't the best way. Everything should have been planned well in advance.

"The shots in *THE NEVERENDING STORY* took longer to do than those in *KRULL*. Every shot had to be programmed—the camera, the rig, and each axis. As each was programmed individually, one shot would take about a day to set up and then one or two days to finish depending on its complexity. It was difficult to do the undulations because I had to work out exactly where the support rod should go down. Since I didn't get the model till quite late in the proceedings, I had to start filming straight away and couldn't get a feel for it. I did do a few tests with a wire and rubber mock-up but it didn't look anything like the dragon, although I did try and keep the right proportions.

"The one model only just lasted the length of shooting. For the armature on the little dragon, we had universal joints which were made of brass and aluminum. After a while they tend to loosen up and become difficult to set. Also the model was covered in rabbit fur which doesn't stretch. The fur didn't cause any problems with ruffling. As the dragon was supposed to be flying; imperceptible movements didn't matter. At one point I was going to use a fan to blow the fur.

"Had I been able to do one of the stronger sequences planned for the dragon it would have been a better film in my view. Since I had no time, the producers resorted to hanging a rubber dragon in front of the blue screen and jiggling the camera to give it some semblance of movement. There are two shots like this in the finished film [both cut from the U.S. version], and they are thankfully brief enough not to be too horrendous.

"In all, I did about a minute-and-a-half of animation but they used only a few seconds here and there. Quite frankly there isn't much for anyone to get excited about. Wolfgang Petersen was pleased with my work and was very apologetic that it had to go. Although the dragon is the film's main character all they have in the picture is a very ineffective full-scale remote-controlled model, which in most shots just lies there. It couldn't walk or do much else. In the final analysis, how much cheaper it would have been if I had done it all. But they wanted to shoot it live and hire a camera crew and 20 people to operate it. They had to pay for all that because of their inexperience.

"Hopefully, the sequel—and there will be one because of the film's success in Germany—will use all the ideas that were axed from the first one." □

# CFQ BOOKSHOP

## 1-800-345-8112

To order by credit card (Visa and Mastercard only), dial the number above toll-free (in Pennsylvania, dial 1-800-662-2444). Calls accepted 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

### To Order By Mail

Check items you wish to order and fill out form below (a xerox copy or handwritten list is acceptable). Credit card orders (Visa and Mastercard only) should include signature, card number, and expiration date. Make checks, money orders, and bank drafts payable to CINEFANTASTIQUE. Foreign orders, please pay in U.S. funds only.

### Shipping Information

Books are packaged securely in air-cushioned envelopes or sturdy shipping cartons. Magazines, including subscription copies, are mailed in envelopes or polybags, to arrive unmarked and in collector's item condition. Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery. Items ordered at the same time are not necessarily shipped together.

### Postage Charges

No charge for back issues of CINEFANTASTIQUE or subscriptions. Add 50¢ per item for books and \$1.00 for other merchandise. Foreign orders add 50% additional.



### Distinctive Gift Card

Order books, merchandise, back issues, and subscriptions for those special people on your gift list and we'll do the shipping and enclose the distinctive gift card pictured above, inscribed from you. List orders, names and addresses on a separate sheet.

### CINEFANTASTIQUE SUBSCRIPTIONS

- 4 Issues USA ..... \$16.00
- 4 Issues Foreign/Canada ..... \$19.00
- 8 Issues USA ..... \$30.00
- 8 Issues Foreign/Canada ..... \$35.00
- 12 Issues USA ..... \$42.00
- 12 Issues Foreign/Canada ..... \$49.00

### PAGE 51

- George Pal Puppet Films ..... \$ 7.00
- The Making of Dune ..... \$ 5.95
- Horror Film Stars, paper ..... \$12.95
- Horror Film Stars, cloth ..... \$16.95
- In the Nick of Time ..... \$19.95

### PAGE 53

- Eroticism in Fantasy ..... \$14.95
- House of Horror ..... \$ 7.98
- Creature Features ..... \$ 7.95
- World of Star Trek ..... \$ 8.95

### PAGE 54

- Vol 13 No 2/3 ..... \$12.00
- Vol 12 No 5/6 ..... \$12.00
- Vol 9 No 3/4 ..... \$12.00
- Vol 6 No 4/Vol 7 No 1 ..... \$20.00

### PAGE 56

- Vol 11 No 4 ..... \$ 6.00
- Vol 10 No 3 ..... \$ 6.00
- Vol 6 No 2 ..... \$10.00
- Vol 3 No 2 ..... \$10.00

### PAGE 59

- Double Depalma, paper ..... \$ 8.95
- Double Depalma, cloth ..... \$14.95
- Horrors of Hammer ..... \$ 9.95

- Men, Martians, Machines ..... \$ 8.95
- The Joy Makers ..... \$ 8.95
- Shores of Another Sea ..... \$ 8.95
- Farmer 1952-1964 ..... \$ 8.95
- Farmer 1964-1973 ..... \$ 8.95
- The Forgotten Planet ..... \$ 8.95
- The Paradox Men ..... \$ 8.95
- Unearthly Neighbors ..... \$ 8.95

### PAGE 60

- Grande Illusions ..... \$12.95
- Reach for the Stars ..... \$ 5.00
- Fast and Furious ..... \$17.95
- Ken Russell's Films ..... \$32.50
- Vintage Science Fiction ..... \$19.95

### PAGE 63

- Special Effects ..... \$49.95
- Special Effects, deluxe ..... \$95.00
- SF-2 ..... \$19.95
- Disney Calendar ..... \$ 7.95
- Fantasia ..... \$30.00
- The Illusion of Life ..... \$60.00

Order Subtotal \$ \_\_\_\_\_

6% Sales Tax\* \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Postage \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Back Issues \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Subscriptions \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*applies to Illinois residents only

**P.O. BOX 270, OAK PARK, ILLINOIS 60303**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE (credit card orders only)

Account # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_  VISA  MC

# LETTERS



## HANG-IN, THERE

You released some information concerning the fourth Star Wars picture [14:4 14:5:11]. In so many words you stated that the next picture would be entitled THE CLONE WARS or THE OLD REPUBLIC, that it would be directed by Steven Spielberg and filmed at studios in Hollywood. You also stated that filming was to begin in September 1984.

Another science fiction magazine has charged that your information is false. They went on to say that your information was based on unconfirmed rumors, lies, and was so much hogwash. I know that one of you must be wrong. Which one is it? I am hanging on suspenders!

Joy Trasti  
El Monte, California

[Rumors, certainly; hogwash, possibly; but lies—now that's not nice! We understand that Lucasfilm producer Howard Kazanjian is working on the sequel at the company's L.A. offices, a nondescript building across from Universal Pictures marked "The Egg Company." Spielberg has decided to do PETER PAN next. Publicity spokesmen for Lucasfilm refused to either confirm or deny the details of our story when questioned at the World Science Fiction Convention in Los Angeles in September. We'll keep you posted.]

Oops! You really blew it when announcing another Star Wars movie.

I seriously doubt there will ever be another, unless it's several years down the road, perhaps done by someone other than Lucas. The Star Wars movies have served their purpose, made all concerned very rich and Lucasfilm a totally independent entity. It's obvious, now, they will be moving on to new territory.

Your premature announcement sounded like some hyper-wishful thinking from Los Angeles. Maybe a flack at 20th Century-Fox? Wherever

it came from, I expect a lot better from Cinefantastique. Did you really buy CLONE WARS?

Gene Blodgett  
San Francisco, California

## KNOWS HIS ABC'S

In your DUNE double-issue, production designer Tony Masters insists: "Our first principle... has always been: If it's been seen or done before, throw it out!" Given the fact that Mr. Masters is British, it surprises me that he failed to recognize that Ron Miller's designs for the Bene Gesserit Alphabet (page 35) are exact duplicates of Celtic or Gaelic letters that have been in common usage for about fourteen centuries.

As is readily obvious, the letters shown, from left to right, are: (top row) a double "F," an "L," and a "U"; (bottom) a "Z," another "Z," and an "R." The Dover book, *Celtic Art*, shows the identical letters on pages 90 through 95. Gladly for Mr. Miller, I don't believe there are any violated copyrights on the written Celtic alphabet.

Alfred A. Shامية  
Lincoln Park, Michigan

**Ron Miller replies:** *On DUNE unlike many other SF movies set in the distant future, we tried to show a continuity with the past. It eventually became a very important principle in*

*the design to try to give artifacts a sense of development, of history. As part of this effort every culture—the Bene Gesserit, the Harkonnens, the Fremen, etc.—was not only given an alphabet or set of symbols, but these were purposefully evolved from terrestrial sources. Celtic was chosen for the Bene Gesserit because its calligraphic quality suited the Bene Gesserit "personality" and because of its long association with magic and myth.*

## THERE IS SCI-FI, AND THEN THERE IS SCIENCE FICTION

"In a lot of ways this novel is the antithesis of the usual raygun and spaceship science fiction I'm used to seeing."—David Lynch.

I thought that line in reference to *Dune* [14:4 14:5:29] belonged to English teachers twenty years ago! Since I have seen similar words from Ridley Scott and (to a lesser degree) George Lucas, let's set the record straight. The term Sci-Fi was coined as a slur against bad SF films long ago. The best of the prose form of modern science fiction has not been "raygun-spaceship" for forty years.

What is read in the genre is generally not what is seen on the silver screen. It is not clear to me why at this late date filmmakers still ignore the body and spirit of good modern science fiction.

Glad you had the sidebar on John Schoenherr, it is amusing how much DUNE's design looks like his concepts.

Al Jackson  
Houston, Texas

Your coverage of DUNE was very interesting; I do, however, have one complaint. I am beginning to tire of seeing Sting's name and picture every time DUNE is mentioned, as if he had the only important role in the entire film. With such a distinguished cast of talented actors on hand, your reporter's preference for a rock musician can only lead me to shake my head in amazement.

Paula Mastine  
New Bedford, Massachusetts

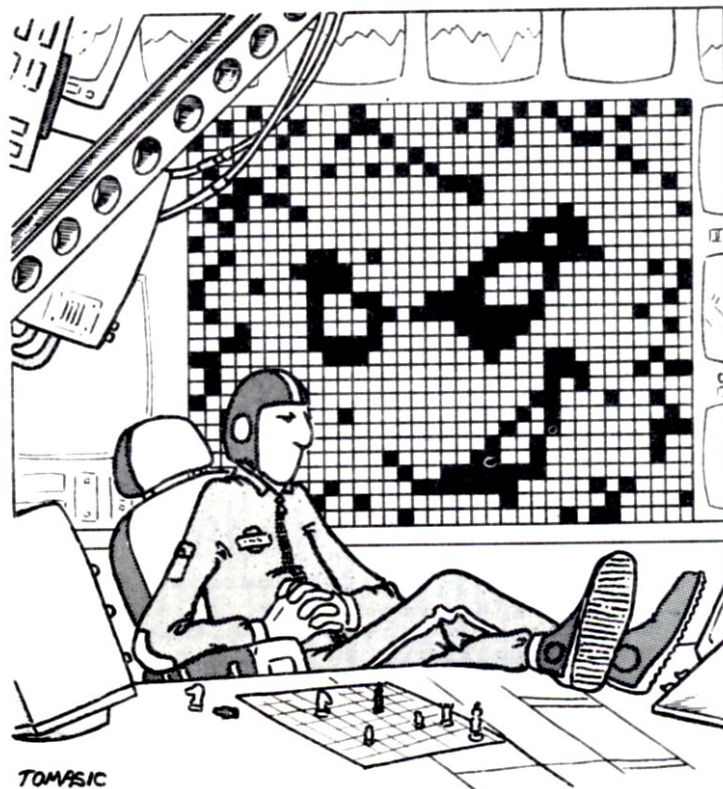
## DUNE CORRECTIONS

There are two inaccurate photo captions about DUNE (perhaps three: the prop at bottom left, page 87 looks more Arrakian than Caladanian). On page 35: the stairway is, of course, on Caladan—not Arrakis—as the elaborate wood motif indicates quite clearly (Arrakis being all sandstone and very short on trees).

And on page 83: while the description of the desert set on Stage 8 is reasonably accurate (though it proved to have only limited adaptability precisely because it was hard to disguise by varying the shooting angle—they had to tear part of the big dune down and rebuild it because it stuck out so distinctively), the fact is, these stills are not of that set. Both were taken on the backlot, shot under the big "rock wall." And both show Paul with Jessica—not Chani—during their escape into the desert after the Harkonnen attack on Arrakeen (during which Duke Leto dies).

Paul's sandworm ride in this sequence was shot on another backlot set, with the moments leading up to it shot at Samalayucca, and additional blue screen elements shot on stage 2. Incidentally, having spent thousands of dollars and numerous man-hours building the world's biggest front projection screen for the "Dune" set on stage 8, when it came to shooting, they flooded the set with so much light, the damn thing caught fire and burned down!

George Godwin  
Venice, Italy



2001? Don't think I ever saw it. Why do you ask?

## STORY BEHIND "LOST" LEAGUES

Some 6 years ago, as curator for the City of Los Angeles "Hollywood Museum" collection, it was my assignment to complete the restoration of the 1916 silent version of 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA, which you refer to as a lost film [14:3:53]. I pulled the nitrate from the vaults and through arrangements

with Blackhawk films acetate copies were pulled from the original and then, upon the return of a copy to Los Angeles, over two weeks were spent in re-editing the film, as the nitrate was completely out of sequence. As a result copies of the film are readily available for purchase from Blackhawk. So far as is known the film is essentially a complete one. We affectionately refer to it as the Santa Claus film because of the costume of Alan Halubar wore as Captain Nemo.

Many times films are mentioned in various articles as "lost films." Another excellent example is Edison's FRANKENSTEIN which is consistently listed as a lost film. Approximately 4 or 5 years ago Forrest Ackerman and I, along with several other aficionados of Science Fiction, sat in Ackerman's front room thoroughly amazed to watch a poorly

edited copy of the film screened before our eyes. It was a one and only copy owned by a private collector. Although I offered at no charge to make a print from the film shown and re-edit it into proper sequence, I have heard nothing from the collector since.

Dr. Walter J. Daugherty  
Los Angeles, California

### SURE, STEPHEN, SURE

Is there any truth to the rumor that when Stephen King signs away the highly lucrative movie rights to his megabuck bestsellers it's stipulated in his contracts that he must promote each upcoming film adaptation of his work as being "the best yet?" Or is this just a bad habit he repeatedly (and I do mean repeatedly!) over-indulges in?

James M. York  
Alhambra, California

## HORROR, FANTASY & SF FILM MARKETPLACE

Classified ads are \$ .75 per word, caps are \$ .25 extra per word, bold caps \$ .50 additional, payable in advance. Send to CINEFANTASTIQUE, P. O. Box 270, Oak Park, IL. 60303.

**WALKER DESIGNS** by Lee Seiler. Sure to become Collector's Items. Cliffridge Publishing, P.O. Box 1404, El Cerrito CA 94530.

"10,000 DIFFERENT ORIGINAL MOVIE POSTERS. Catalogue \$2.00. Mnemonics Ltd., Dept. "E," 3600 21st St. No. 9, N.E., Calgary, Alta., T2E 6V6, CANADA.

MONTHLY AUCTION CATALOG of rare science fiction movie material, pulps, original animation art, more. 300-400 items pictured, described monthly \$1.00 for current issue: Collector's Showcase, 6763 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood, CA 90028.

FREE POSTER CATALOG! Movie material from Europe. Horror, Fantasy, SF, 007. Updated monthly. SASE to Mr. Werner Lehmann, Dept. CIN, 3050 Perry Avenue, Bronx, New York 10467.

**LEARN MAKE-UP ARTISTRY** Instructor Bert Roth, director of make-up for ABC-TV. Write Bert Roth, 322 W. 57 St., NY 10019.

**MOVIE AND TV MAGAZINES**, books and paperbacks. Doc Savage, TV Avengers, U.N.C.L.E., James Bond, Prisoner, TV Guides, Playboys, Monster and Movie Magazines, Dark Shadows, premiums, gum cards, fanzines, action paperbacks, Planet of the Apes, Movie Pressbooks, photos, posters, lobby cards sets, etc. 1920-1984. Catalogues \$1.00 Rogofsky, Box 107C, Glen Oaks, NY 11004.

**THE RESEARCH COUNCIL OF MAKE-UP ARTISTS, INC.** We supply special materials to professional make-up artists, including prosthetic adhesives, molding waxes, Color Process Foundations, Lipcolors, with over 900 various items and sizes available. Current catalog available for 20¢ in stamps. Special Seminars in July and August. Box 2134, Lowell, MA 01851

1,000,000 SCI-FI/HORROR, FANTASY & OTHER FILMUSIC RECORDINGS! Catalogue—\$1.00. Soundtrack value guide—\$5.50. RTSCQ, Box 1829, Novato, CA 94948

**FILM MAGAZINES & BOOKS**, many publications about special effects, science fiction & comic art. Put a world of wonders in your mailbox! Send \$1 (refunded with first order) for catalog of over 2500 items. BUD PLANT, Inc., PO Box 1886 Dept. CIN, Grass Valley CA 95945.

Free catalogues: Gibson, Ford, Trek, Wars, TV, science fiction, horror. Jerry Ohlinger's Movie Material Store Inc., 120 West 3rd Street New York, NY 10012. 212-674-8474. Open every day, 1-8:00 p.m.

Original movie posters for sale! Send \$1.00 for giant catalog. Movie Poster Place, Box 309, Lansdowne, PA 19050-0309

**SPECIAL EFFECTS AND PROSTHETIC MAKE-UP.** We sell a wide variety of professional make-up supplies including our own brand of high quality Foam Latex. Send 20¢ in

stamps for our current catalogue. THE MAKE-UP PLACE, 100 Boylston St., Boston, Mass. 02116.

**JAPANESE MOVIE POSTERS**, Jedi, 007, Star Trek, many more. SASE for list. 1197 Hawthorne, Detroit, Michigan 48236

"Before the CAMERA ACTION" you'll need a LIGHT. Introducing the **CLAPBOARD LIGHTER**. Quality windproof lighter with printed workable clapboard. For yours send \$3.95 plus \$1.75 postage and handling to C-J Wolf Enterprises, 1156 Carlsbad Pl., Ventura, Calif. 93003. (Dealer inquiries welcome.)

Puppet-Animation/Stop-Motion-Animation. I want to buy books and magazines about these (short or feature-length) films. It must or should be books about the Brothers Diehl, Karel Zeman, Jiri Trnka, or about films from countries such as Russia, Germany, Japan, Canada, USA, Czechoslovakia, or books and magazines about films from the third world (if there exists puppet-animation), Rainer Hempel, Wilhelmstrasse 33, 4572 Essen/Oldb., BRD/Germany, Phone: 0 54 34/10 71

Need info on **GIMMICK FILMS** for my book. Send SASE for details: Alan D. Williams, 7451 Via Amorita Ave., Downey, CA 90241

1000's of Science Fiction, Horror, Occult, Movie, TV Tie Ins. Paperback & Hardcover. Free Catalog, Lamira, Box 12093, Dept 95, Baltimore, MD 21281.

**SEX, VIOLENCE and TURKEYS** are covered in Sprockets, a new magazine for Golden Turkey and low-budget sci-fi/horror fans. Its latest 52-page issue is packed with photos, features, plus a free, zany role-playing game just for movie fans! \$3.50 to: Martin Klug, Sprockets, 5730 Chatport, St. Louis, MO 63129-4312

Fantasy Creature Catalog. Send SASE to The Book Stall 219 N. Main, Lockhart TX 78644

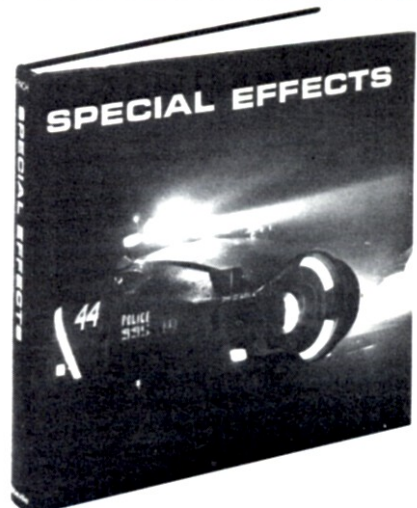
"Producing the **INDEPENDENT MOTION PICTURE**" Weekend intensive seminar. Nov. 17 & 18, 1984 Chicago. Registration and information: 312-337-5647

**CONAN SWORD**, Fantastic massive steel and resin studio replica wallhanger. \$195.00 P.P. C.F.Q. Vol 14:4 page 4. Dealers, 3 or more \$145.00 each. Studio Props, 5654 Cahuenga No. 330, North Hollywood, CA 91601

**ATTENTION ALL SERIOUS COLLECTORS OF STOP-MOTION MEMORABILIA!** A FORMER PROMINENT COLLECTOR IS SELLING HIS 15 YEAR COLLECTION VIA A SERIES OF SALES LISTS. THE FIRST LIST IS NOW AVAILABLE AND CONTAINS DOZENS AND DOZENS OF ITEMS—SOME RARE, SOME SCARCE, SOME ONE-OF-A-KIND, AND ALL DESIRABLE. TO RECEIVE A COPY OF THIS FIRST LIST SEND FOUR INTERNATIONAL REPLY COUPONS (AVAILABLE AT YOUR POST OFFICE) TO: ALLAN OSBORNE 435 BAY STREET, PORT MELBOURNE, 3207 VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA

**SCIENCE FICTION FILM/JOURNAL.** Film lists galore, possibly the largest newsletter in the country, send \$1.50 for your first edition to Dan Somber, P.O. Box 2627, NY, NY 10185

# CFQ BOOKSHOP



At last, a documentation of those technical innovations that have led to the most spectacular special effects films of our time! Best-selling author Christopher Finch uses films by famed effects directors such as: Cecil B. DeMille, Steven Spielberg, and, of course, Walt Disney to demystify the technical aspects of optical printing, computer graphics, and much more, presented in a gorgeous, coffee table art book from Abrams. With 200 full color illustrations, 252 pages, 10 1/4 X 10 1/4, cloth, **\$49.95**. An autographed, specially bound, collector's copy is also available in an embossed, Hollywood-style film canister, **\$95.00**

## Art Books from Abrams

### DISNEY ANIMATION 1985 CALENDAR

The months have never looked better with each featuring a large color still recapturing a classic piece of Disney Animation. Complete with captions by John Cane-maker, 12 X 14—"living color," **\$7.95**

### FANTASIA

A film which represents Disney's most daring ascent into animated fantasy is now captured on 210 delightful pages. Complete with never before published transcripts, sketches, paintings, gorgeous full color frames, excerpts from Disney's planning meetings, as well as the magical, lovable characters. "Fantasia" thrilled its audience and remains a timeless classic. Cloth, **\$35.00**

### DISNEY ANIMATION: THE ILLUSION OF LIFE

The definitive, inside story of the art, technique, and history of Disney Animation. 400 plus full-color plates and over 2000 b & w illustrations. Over 95% of photos never published before. 10 1/4 X 11, 576 pages. Cloth, **\$60.00**



Richard Meyer's unique approach to the history of science fiction films "says it all with pictures." As follow-up to the author's previous book, "A Pictorial History of Science Fiction Films," this second volume covers movies from **ROLLERBALL** to **RETURN OF THE JEDI**. A very thorough compilation of science fiction films; with plot summaries, production notes, behind-the-scenes information, and more than 300 photos (many appearing here for the first time), this book is true gem, and just in time for holiday gift-giving. 256 pages. Cloth, **\$19.95**

**ORDER TOLL FREE BY PHONE OR USE ORDER FORM PROVIDED, SEE PAGE 61**

JOHN CARPENTER'S  
STARMAN

In 1977 Voyager II  
was launched into space,  
inviting all life forms in the universe  
to visit our planet.

Get Ready.  
Company's Coming.

COLUMBIA PICTURES PRESENTS  
A MICHAEL DOUGLAS — LARRY J. FRANCO PRODUCTION  
JEFF BRIDGES KAREN ALLEN  
JOHN CARPENTER'S  
STARMAN

CHARLES MARTIN SMITH RICHARD JAECKEL  
MUSIC BY JACK NITSZCHE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER MICHAEL DOUGLAS  
WRITTEN BY BRUCE A. EVANS & RAYNOLD GIDEON CO-PRODUCED BY BARRY BERNARDI  
PRODUCED BY LARRY J. FRANCO DIRECTED BY JOHN CARPENTER

PG PARENTAL GUIDANCE SUGGESTED

DOOLBY STEREO

OPENS DECEMBER 14 AT A THEATRE NEAR YOU.